SEVERAL DISCOURSES ON SPECIAL SUBJECTS,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AND UPON

OTHER OCCASIONS.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

PSALM cxlvii. 1.

O praiſe the Lord, for it is a good Thing to ſing Praiſes unto our God; yea, a joyful and pleaſant Thing it is to be thankful.

Page 1.

Serm. I. The Pleaſures of Gratitude and Benevolence, improved by Church Muſic. —Preached at the Anniverſary Meeting of the Three Choirs of *Glouceſter*, *Worceſter*, and *Hereford*, on *Wedneſday*, *Sept.* 12, 1753.

JOHN xviii. 38.

Pilate *ſaith unto Him, What is Truth?*

pp. 33, 61.

Sermons

Sermons II. and III. Two Diſcourſes on the Nature, Evidence, and Importance of Truth.—Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, at St. *Mary*'s, on St. *Andrew*'s Day, *November* 30, and on Advent Sunday, *December* 1, 1754.

PHILIPP. iv. 8.

Finally, Brethren, whatſoever Things are true, whatſoever Things are honeſt, whatſoever Things are juſt; whatſoever Things are pure, whatſoever Things are lovely, whatſoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praiſe, think on theſe Things. p. 91.

Serm. IV. The true Intention, public Uſe and Importance of Academic Education conſidered. — Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, at St. *Mary*'s, on *Act-Sunday, July* 13, 1755.

ROMANS viii. 30.

Moreover, whom He did predeſtinate, them He alſo called, and whom He called, them He alſo juſtified. pp. 129, 155.

Sermons

Sermons V. and VI. The Scripture Doctrine of Predeſtination ſtated and explained.— Two Diſcourſes preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, at St. *Mary*'s, on *Sunday*, *June* 18, 1758.

ISAIAH xl. 11.

He ſhall feed his Flock like a Shepherd; He ſhall gather the Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his Boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with Young. p. 183.

Serm. VII. The Uſe and Authority of the Paſtoral Office, and the Rite of Inveſtiture with it, conſidered.— Preached in his Majeſty's Chapel at *Whitehall*, at the Conſecration of the Right Rev. *Charles*, Lord Biſhop of *Carliſle*, on *Sunday*, *March* 21, 1762.

2 CORINTH. viii. 3.

For to their Power I bear Record; yea, and beyond their Power, they were willing of themſelves. p. 213.

Sermon VIII. Motives of Munificence to the diſtreſſed Children of the Clergy.— Preached

Preached at the Anniverſary Meeting of the Sons of the Clergy, in the Cathedral Church of St. *Paul, London*, on *Thurſday, May* 16, 1771.

PROV. xi. 25.

And he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf. p. 231.

Serm. IX. The public and mutual Benefit of communicating Chriſtian Inſtruction. — Preached in *Chriſt-Church, London*, before the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, on *Thurſday, May* 10, 1781.

ROMANS xii. 15.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice. pp.253,267.

Serm. X. XI. The Intention and due Improvement of the Sympathetic Affections in the human Mind. — Two Diſcourſes preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *James, Weſtminſter*, on *Sunday, April* 19, and *Thurſday, April* 23, 1789; being the Days of *General Thankſgiving* for his Majeſty's ſafe Recovery; and of the public Proceſſion to St. *Paul*'s: — Publiſhed by Requeſt.

DISCOURSE I.

The Pleaſures of Gratitude and Benevolence improved by Church-Muſic. ——Preached at the Anniverſary Meeting of the three Choirs of *Glouceſter*, *Worceſter*, and *Hereford*, on *Wedneſday*, *Sept.* 12th, 1753.

PSALM CXLVII. 1.

O praiſe the Lord; for it is a good Thing to ſing Praiſes unto our God; yea a joyful and pleaſant Thing it is to be thankful.

THE many excellent, and much ſuperior perſons, who have ſtood up before me in theſe your anniverſary aſſemblies of love and harmony, to animate your affections,

to urge forwards your ready zeal, to keep alive and quicken that ſacred fire, which the power of melody had excited, may ſeem to have exhauſted the ſubject, which the occaſion preſcribes; or at leaſt to render the taſk very difficult to every one, that ſucceeds them in the place and office, which they have adorned. But the praiſes of benevolence can never be exhauſted, whilſt there is an infinite Being to exerciſe acts of goodneſs, or dependent creatures to receive his donations: the great fountain of beneficence never ſhall be drained, whilſt there remaineth a *thirſty land:* the channels of charity never ſhall be dried up, being ſupplied by a fountain, that in its nature is inexhauſtible. *The barrel of meal ſhall not waſte, neither ſhall the cruiſe of oil fail,*[a] ſo long as the prophet, or the ſon of the prophet liveth.

I have the ſatisfaction too of thinking, that what may ſeem at firſt to be a diſcouragement, is an advantage to the preacher; that your judgments are already convinced by what has been before urged upon the ſubject; that your underſtandings are already furniſhed with the beſt principles; that your love and gratitude are awakened by the impulſes which you

[a] 1 Kings xvii. 14.

have

have already felt; that your attention is ready to accompany me; your minds prepared to give aſſent to the few truths and exhortations which I ſhall offer; and your zeal only diſadvantageous to me in being ſpontaneouſly haſty to practiſe them. The very appearance itſelf on this occaſion denotes the tendency of your inclinations; the fulneſs of the congregation, the univerſal diffuſion of benevolence throughout this liberal hoſpitable country. Leſt I ſhould therefore only retard, inſtead of accelerating your bounty, indulge me your patience a few moments in going before thoſe, who are ready to accompany me to the altar of joy and gladneſs in the oblation of pious gratitude, thankſgiving, liberality, and charity.

The words of the text are in the evening ſervice of our church, at the concluſion of each month, placed at the head of a ſett of inſpired hymns, wherein all nature is called upon to ſing forth, before intelligent agents, the praiſes of its Creator: and they ſeem to be placed at the end of the book of pſalms, by whomſoever collected, in order to leave impreſſions of gratitude and the duty of thankſgiving, excited by the powers of harmony, and the univerſal chorus of all the wondrous objects of the natural world, to

leave impreſſions, I ſay, that ſhould never be effaced. The ſentiments are inforced, at the very entrance upon the ſubject, by the natural pleaſure attending the diſcharge of the duty: pleaſure, for which we are indebted to the Creator, without any previous merit of our own, by the very conſtitution of nature, which is his original law acting upon us, whereby he hath made us capable of receiving ſenſations of pleaſure from the organized inſtruments of the material world. But ſtill we may improve theſe ſenſations and impulſes into our own virtue. *O ſing praiſes unto the Lord therefore with thankſgiving, ſing praiſes upon the harp unto our God! Praiſe him all ye people, praiſe him all his hoſt! Praiſe him upon the tabret, praiſe him upon the ſtrings and pipe! O praiſe the Lord, for it is a good thing to ſing praiſes unto our God; yea a joyful and pleaſant thing it is to be thankful.*[b]

The words naturally lead us to reflect upon the pleaſures of gratitude, encouraged, and excited by harmony. To theſe ſenſations of pleaſure natural motives towards duty are annexed: motives, which cannot well be withſtood, without a vicious counteraction to the very bias of nature. Let us then,

[b] Pſ. CXLVII—CL.

Firſt,

First, contemplate the goodneſs of the Creator in connecting duty with pleaſure. We have reaſon to be thankful, that God hath urged us to acts of virtue by motives of delight either attending, or leading the way to the performance. He might have impelled us without any agreeable ſenſations to accompliſh his will; as the planets are driven by projection, and governed by gravitation, to compleat their orbits. He might have guided us by inſtinct, like the animal world, without the pleaſing perceptions of conſcience, or any reflective ſatisfactions. But the Deity acts upon man by motives more agreeable and delightful to the ſpecies. The organization of the animal part is made greatly ſubſervient to the obligations of the mental. The ear and the eye are made the inlets of pleaſure, at the ſame time that the one, as a faithful centinel, receives information, and the other, as a preſiding guardian, admits various degrees of light, to excite the ſoul, and direct the body, towards their reſpective functions.

Theſe indeed are pleaſures in ſome meaſure enjoyed in common with the animal world: which yet are not on this account leſs delightful to the percipient, becauſe more extenſively beſtowed; although the animal creation ſhare with us in our ſenſitive enjoyments.

But then there are pleaſures in the accompliſhment of the divine will, peculiar to rational agents alone: pleaſures founded on reflection; on a moral ſenſe, and conſciouſneſs of what is right; and begun in abſtract thinking. Thus the Creator having endowed man with many faculties, intellectual, as well as corporeal, all tending to lead him to happineſs, is willing to conduct him to his end, not only by way of reaſon, but by ſubordinate appetites, and gratifications of the ſenſitive organs, and by ſatisfactions attendant upon moral ſentiments inſtilled through thoſe organs, propelling, as it were, the ſoul to action by a kind of intellectual inſtinct.

But man is uſually ſo enveloped in pleaſure, that he allows himſelf too little time to meditate on the primary author of pleaſure; who inveſted him with the organs of delight, who made the ſeveral connexions, and eſtabliſhed the proportions of ſenſibility, between the organ, and its ſtriking object.

Amidſt the ſatisfactions of the conſcious ſoul, there are none greater than thoſe attendant upon gratitude, and the opportunities of expreſſing it. With what feelings of inward pleaſure does ſhe exert herſelf in the performance, when the expreſſions are to be poured forth towards an aſſiſtant fellow-creature!

ture! How much greater then, and, as it were, tumultuous muſt be the overflowings of joy and gladneſs, when occaſion calls her, in united concert, with multitudes of fellow-creatures, to make her thankſgivings acceptable, upon the altar of praiſe, to the great author and fountain of all beneficence!

For beſides the bleſſings of our creation and preſervation; bleſſings, which with every riſing day preſent themſelves as conſtant topics of praiſe; bleſſings, which, in ſome meaſure, we enjoy in common with the lower claſſes of the ſenſitive world; though we have far a ſuperior fruition of them, enjoying over again in recollection, what they enjoy but once in preſent fleeting ſenſation, which paſſeth away, and is no more; I ſay, beſides the bleſſings, which flow in upon us by mere creation and preſervation, our ſuperior ſituation in the ſcale of beings, the privilege of reaſon, and all the reflective pleaſures, that ariſe from thence, are a perpetual demand upon the intelligent creature for the higheſt acts of praiſe and thankſgiving, through every age of his exiſtence.

The higher men are placed in the diſtinctions of poſſeſſion, the temporal conveniences of life, or the eminence of authority amidſt their fellow-creatures of the rational ſpecies,

the warmer ſenſe of gratitude ought they to cheriſh by every motive of reaſon, and by every faculty of ſenſation, towards the God, who raiſed them, and fixed their ſtation in this rank of ſuperiority, ſaying, here ſhall thy place be. But let the loweſt of men ſtill conſider, that how inferior ſoever his rank may be, in the ſubordinations of the ſocial ſpecies, conſtituted for the general benefit of the whole, yet he enjoys common organs of ſenſation, equal with thoſe of the higheſt princes: he is endowed with faculties of reaſon to reflect upon, and advance towards his Creator in the perfection of moral attributes: he has ſtill an order of beings below himſelf: he has his ſphere of dominion over the creatures made for his ſervice, food, and nouriſhment. For we are indeed lower than angels; but then we are higher than brutes. And let the loweſt order of men always carry one ſentiment along with them, that by a proper uſe of their preſent faculties, whatever they are, they may advance themſelves into the dignity of angelic perfection in a future ſtate, proportioned to their preſent improvements of their reſpective talents. The loweſt order of men have equal reaſon then to join with the higheſt in common oblations of thanks and praiſe to the giver of life, and ſenſe, and reaſon,

ſon, and the proſpect of immortality through *Chriſt Jeſus*. For let the higheſt conſider, that great and eminent as their ſtation may be in this life, yet they may become much greater, and better, and more glorious beings in another.

And ſhall we not be thankful to him, who hath vouchſafed theſe preſent privileges, and theſe proſpects of future inheritance? Should man be ſilent, the brute creation would cry out againſt him; the birds of the air, which in their early matins chant forth to rational agents the power, and dominion, and wiſdom of him, who gave them their voice, and their ſweet changes of notes; yea the very inanimate part might cry out, in its aptitude to fill up its proper place in the creation; *The ſtone might cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhould anſwer it.*[c] Let not man then dare to refuſe to join in the univerſal concert of nature! We dare not, we cannot be ſilent! "Yea we praiſe thee, O God, we "acknowledge thee to be the Lord: with all "the earth, we worſhip thee, the father "everlaſting: with the heavens, and all the "powers that are therein, we cry aloud, that "heaven and earth are full of the majeſty of "thy Glory!

[c] Hab. II. 2.

As

As gratitude then is thus a duty, we have reaſon to glorify him, even on this account, that he hath made it an *agreeable* duty, even the moſt pleaſing exerciſe of the human mind. For it is a duty, which does not fall under any law of compulſion; to which we cannot properly be impelled by any civil or human ſanction: becauſe whatever is involuntary would not be gratitude. Gratitude, in its very eſſence, muſt be a free act of the ſoul, flowing from a lively ſenſe of benevolence acting in our favour; from a deſire, and kind of natural appetite to make a return. Though it does not then fall under the ſanctions of any human law, yet it falls, as it were, under the law of inſtinct. There is ſuch a natural pleaſure in returning good, ſuch a natural thirſt after the opportunity in every generous breaſt, that the very proſpect of the occaſion is an haſty anticipation of felicity, and urges us vehemently to the accompliſhment. It is thus emphatically expreſſed, in the ſong of the pſalmiſt, by the moſt pungent, and acute of all ſenſible appetites, when employed in efforts to conciliate the favour, and thankfully ſet forth the praiſes of the ſupreme benefactor in his holy temple. *My ſoul is* ATHIRST *for God, yea even for the living God*; for an opportunity of praiſing him in his ſacred tabernacle:

bernacle: *When ſhall I come to appear before the preſence of God*, in that his holy place; *in the voice of praiſe and thankſgiving, among ſuch as keep holy day!*[a]

There is a kind of pleaſure, as well as pain in the firſt ſtimulating ſprings of appetite, prompting us to that which is beneficial to our nature, or conducive to the common good of the ſpecies, whereof we conſtitute a part. The expectations of pleaſure too, attendant upon the gratification, are ſtill a farther impulſe from the Deity, urging us to the accompliſhment of his will, and at the ſame time pointing out to us, what his will and conſequently our duty is. The internal feelings of compaſſion upon the ſight of a diſtreſſed object, the ſtrong inclinations to gratitude in the breaſt of the relieved, are both of them a bias upon the ſoul to mutual intercourſes of benevolence between the affluent, and laborious part of the human ſpecies. Mutual benevolence is neceſſary between agents created ſocial by the very law of their nature; that are alternately full, and indigent. Compaſſion then on the one hand, and gratitude on the other, are natural directions impreſſed upon the ſoul, urging us all to the

[a] Pſ. xlii. 2, 5.

ſame

ſame central point of love, good-will, and bounty.

But how ſhall we be grateful, or return good to him, who by the very ſelf-exiſtence of his nature is always full, and can never ſtand in need of any aſſiſtances, or want any additions of happineſs from us, his creatures? He hath graciouſly pointed out a way to us. He hath ordained his ſubſtitutes upon earth, to ſtand in need of, and receive our gratitude. There are objects of his love daily before our eyes. *And he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath ſeen*, upon motives of gratitude to the common maker of both, who hath placed him before us, and implanted in us a ſenſation urging us to the redreſs of his indigence; *how can he pretend to love God*, or be truly grateful to that God, *whom he hath not ſeen?* [c] Gratitude to God then, conſidered either as a moral, or religious virtue, implies love and bounty to man. Let us now therefore proceed,

Secondly, to conſider how this affection may be excited, encouraged, and inflamed by the harmony of ſounds in vocal and inſtrumental muſic.

It may be thought here almoſt impertinent to recite, before this audience, the power of harmony in general, or attempt to deſcribe,

[c] 1 John iv. 20.

what

what yourſelves have felt. But the connexion of my diſcourſe requires me to ſay ſomething upon the ſubject, in order to juſtify our aſſembly, and deduce the moral inferences.

Juſtification indeed, I am perſuaded, within a few hours, it will not want; ſo ſoon as the good end of this meeting ſhall diſplay itſelf; ſo ſoon as the overflowings of your charity ſhall be collected into one ſtream, and be ready to be poured forth into the thirſty ground.

But it may be obſerved, that we are formed with a natural ſenſe of proportion; from whence ariſe our ideas of beauty and deformity: proportion in general is made agreeable to our ſenſes: ſound admits a vaſt variety of proportions: hence it is rendered capable, by a ſkilful adjuſtment of its varied proportions, of cauſing a vaſt variety of agreeable perceptions in the ſoul: the right adjuſtment of theſe proportions is harmony: and the quick ſucceſſion of theſe perceptions is pleaſure.

Muſic therefore has in all ages been eſteemed the ſtrongeſt incentive of paſſion: and in all ages it has been ſo eſteemed, becauſe in all ages has it been ſo experienced. Wherein then can we employ it better, than to animate our love and thankfulneſs in celebrating the praiſes of the common father of the univerſe?

For

For when the naſcent flame of gratitude once begins to kindle from rational conſiderations, it is almoſt impoſſible to ſay, to how great an height the ſacred fire may be blown up by the potent inſpirations of ſound.

The perception of harmony ſo ſtrongly and univerſally communicated through all ranks and nations of men, in different degrees of delicate ſenſibility, is a ſtrong preſumptive argument, that it was beſtowed for other ends, and higher purpoſes, than merely to divert, and to amuſe. God hath endowed man with a ſenſe of hearing, that the ears might admoniſh him of approaching miſchief, and be as channels to convey to him the ſentiments of his fellow-creatures. But wherefore was the voice of harmony made ſo delightful to his ear? Why was this organ made ſo exquiſitely ſenſible of the diſtinctions of ſound, in all its minuteſt variations? He might have forewarned him of danger, and enabled him to converſe, without all this niceneſs and acuteneſs of perceptivity. But the Moſt High was pleaſed to create man by a more perfect model than the law of mere neceſſity, or what was juſt barely requiſite to the ſupport of his being; and to make him wonderfully capable of pleaſure, becauſe he hath made him capable of duty and virtue.

The

The ear therefore is made one of the moſt grateful inlets of pleaſure to the ſoul; and the gratifications conveyed through this channel have the moſt powerful influence on the ſpiritual part of our compoſition. For the natural aptitude of ſounds to ſympathize with the ſeveral paſſions of the mind, and of themſelves, as it were, to expreſs paſſion, this aptitude enables them to call up, at will, the ſeveral affections of the human ſoul, and repreſent them before itſelf. "For according to *Tully*, "as every movement of the ſoul hath its cor-"reſpondent feature, whereby it is expreſſed "in the countenance, and its peculiar geſture "in the body, ſo hath it likewiſe its charac-"teriſtic tone of voice. And the whole "frame of man, his features and ſeveral "tones, like the ſtrings of an inſtrument that "is played upon, anſwer to the paſſions of the "ſoul that ſtrike them. For the organs of "the voice are as chords ſtretched out," (nay in truth, ſince *Tully*'s days, they are found to be *real* chords ſtretched out) "which cor-"reſpond to every touch: the acute, the "grave, the ſwift, the ſlow, and ſo on in "like proportion."[f] So that certain ſounds may be ſaid to be, as it were, in uniſon with certain paſſions.

[f] De Oratore, Lib. III. Sect. LVII.

Hence

Hence the concordant mixture of well-proportioned ſounds is to the ear, what a well-drawn painting is to the eye. It preſents, as in a picture, to the mind, the reſemblance of all its features. Muſic is a kind of delineation of affections. By its ſeveral riſings, and fallings, by the ſwellings, and acuteneſs, and ſwiftneſs, and ſlowneſs, and gravity of its notes, it echo's back the ſeveral agitations of the ſoul to itſelf in quick ſucceſſion. It can either lay before the mind its preſent image, or change its natural frame and diſpoſition: It can excite, or accelerate the ſoul's motions, or make it acquieſce with ſatisfaction in its preſent ſtate: It can be calm, as the ſoul is calm; or ſedate and meek, and languid, and loving, and compaſſionate, as the ſoul is under any of theſe different temperatures. Again, it can be rough, and boiſterous, and turbulent, and vehement, and reſentful, and mighty to awaken. It can implore and ſupplicate; it can lament, and mourn; it can rejoice and triumph. It can be *made all things to all men*, that it may *by all means* preſide over, modulate, and command all the human affections.

Thus by the different applications of mimic ſounds is it calculated to promote grief, or contrition of ſpirit in the penitent; to in-

ſpire

ſpire with grandeur and ſublimity of thought the heavenly minded; to inflame with love and gratitude the ſatisfied heart; to blow up, or pacify reſentment in the angry ſpirit; to let down the ſoul inſenſibly in the conſiderate breaſt, and conduct it on, as it were, by gentle, moderate ſteps, to coolneſs, and tranquillity, and contentedneſs, and meekneſs, and a love of *moral* harmony.

In ſhort, agreeably to what the *Roman*[g] orator ſaith of eloquence, it may be ſaid of harmony, (for eloquence borrows great part of its energy and excellence from harmony, nay itſelf is harmony) it can raiſe the dejected; it can depreſs the lofty; it can ſooth the turbulent; it can reſtrain the vehement; it can urge on the dull; it can curb the eager; it can reduce the inſolent; it can invigorate the languid ſpirit. Thus is it uſeful to allay, or encourage any paſſion, as occaſional exigence requires.

Whoever then hath felt its operation in himſelf (and who is there this day, *that hath ears to hear*, who hath not felt it?) cannot well doubt of the good and effectual uſes, to which it may be applied in religious ſervices. For which reaſon holy David, that divine maſter in the ſcience of harmony, as well as ſacred poet, inwardly conſcious of its powers

[g] Tull. de Orat. Lib. 1.

by experience, judged it meet to accompany his hymns into the houſe of God to recommend them there: and we hear him calling, in raptured ſtrains of poetry, far ſuperior to any of the profane lyrics, upon all the organs of melody, to come and aid him, when he has a mind to raiſe up his own heart, or that of other men, to ſublimer ſentiments of warmth and gratitude, towards the common father of life, and every bleſſing. *Awake up my glory*, my tongue, that glorious inſtrument of ſpeech in man! *Awake lute, and harp! I myſelf will awake right early.*[h] To the ſame purpoſe our church, thinking that ſhe cannot follow a ſecurer example in piety, than that of him, who had this teſtimony, *that he found favour with God*, doth retain muſic in her cathedral worſhip, which is her moſt public form, as an ornament to divine ſervice, and a natural help and incentive to man's devotion. It is an aid, in ſhort, as natural as it hath been univerſal: the firſt man felt it, no doubt, with pleaſure, in the ſweet modulated notes, in the morning and evening ſong of the birds of the air, actuated by nature, and uninformed by art, in Paradiſe, that temple of praiſe, built by the hand

[h] Pſ. LVII. 9.

of

of God himſelf. I ſhall add nothing then to what has been frequently, with great learning and judgment offered before this aſſembly, on the antiquity of muſic.

Indeed whoever accurately examines the organ of the human voice, will find it, in itſelf, a proof of the intended univerſality of harmony from the beginning: that organ, which is framed to give us ſo much delight, and improvement in its action, and exhibits ſo much exquiſite wiſdom and deſign of its Creator in its formation, and aptitude to the powerful reach and execution of melody: an organ, which, contrary to the opinion of ancient philoſophy, has been demonſtrated by the late curious experiments of a [i] very ingenious enquirer into the frame of man, in a neighbouring nation, equally ſtudious of nature with our own, to be an inſtrument partly flutal and partly chordal. Wherein the vibrating air, in its various degrees of expiration or propulſion from the lungs, ſerves as a bow, or as quills to ſtrike upon the chords; the correſpondent vibrations of the little chords have by his diſſections been made apparent to the eye, continuing as long as the

[i] Voyez les Memoires de l'Acad. royale des Sciences de l'année 1741. de la formation de la voix de l'homme, par M. Ferrein.

ſound continues, the ſound dying away as the vibrations ceaſe. The cartilages, and muſcles, which ſerve variouſly to extend, or to remit theſe chords, and thereby attenuate them, or increaſe their diameters, ſo as to render the voice either ſhriller, or deeper, are a contrivance, which almoſt ſurpaſſes wonder. Eſpecially when we conſider the amazing ſubtlety, and nice adjuſtment of the machine in its operation; that the whole difference of extenſion or contraction within which the whole extent of the human voice is placed, through an almoſt infinite variety of notes, lies within the compaſs of two or three lines; [k] within the minute compaſs of

[k] Ce que nous venons de dire ſuffit pour mettre en evidence la cauſe de cette varieté prodigieuſe de tons; et d'accords qui ſont l'object principal de la muſique: la delicateſſe, la juſteſſe, et la promptitude des mouvemens qui la produiſent, ſont admirables, tout depend d'un alongement et d'un raccourciſſement dont les differences ſont renfermées dans les bornes de deux ou trois lignes. Cette petite etendue fait, pour ainſi dire, le manche de l'inſtrument.

Un mathematicien celébre diviſe l'octave en 301 parties, qu'une voix juſte, conduite par une oreille fine, peut aiſément entonner. Il n'y a rien que de tres-ordinaire à une voix qui va à trois octaves, en comptant les tons forcés au deſſous de la voix pleine, et au deſſus du fauſſet. Ce ſont donc 903 parties de ton qui doivent etre marquées dans ce petit eſpace par des diviſions et des ſubdiviſions qui leur ſoient propres. L'imagination les confond, mais la nature les diſtingue: elle choiſit le point neceſſarie pour chaque parcelle de ton; et elle paſſe de l'une à l'autre avec une juſteſſe qu'il eſt difficile de concevoir, et avec une rapidité que l'oreille a bien de la peine à ſuivre. A la faveur d'un mouvement ſi ſimple en lui-même, deux petits rubans remplacent tout ce qu'il y a, que dis-je? tout ce qu'on pourroit

a ſixth or fourth part of an inch. How ſurprizing, and paſt the imitation, or even comprehenſion of human art, are thy works, O Lord! And how wonderfully haſt thou made us all for communications of ſocial pleaſure, as well as of moral improvement![1]

To return then, give me leave to obſerve, that if the influence of harmony upon the human paſſions be ſo great, as hath been above deſcribed, it may, by its different addreſſes to the ſoul at different junctures, be very peſtilential and deſtructive, if directed to an evil end, as well as very powerfully beneficial, when applied to the promotion of good. This has been experienced by

pourroit imaginer de cordes ou de tuyaux dans l' etendue de trois octaves du clavecin ou de l' orgue: nous voyons à la verité qu'un ſeul tuyau ſuffit dans quelques inſtrumens pour un certain nombre d'intervalles, mais la diviſion des tons y eſt tres bornée; d'ailleurs combien de ſecours empruntes? quelle diverſite dans les coups de langue du joueur, quelle varietè dans le mouvement des lèvres, quelle combinaiſon dans l' action des doigts; quelle contention enfin dans le jeu de tant de muſcles! que faudra-t-il donc; ou plutot que ne faudra-t-il pas pour tous les tons et pour toutes les parties imaginables des tons de la voix? Cependant deux cordes, trois cartilages, et quelques petits muſcles font cette grande manœuvre: cela ſuffit à la nature pour exprimer toutes les differences qu'on peut concevoir dans la parole, dans la declamation, et dans ce que les differentes parties de la muſique vocale ont de plus recherché! Ib. p. 427—8.

[1] Any perſon who is deſirous to ſee in what manner M. Ferrein ſupports his ſyſtem, will read with great pleaſure the many curious experiments made by him to this purpoſe, as they are elegantly related in the memoir above-quoted.

many wiſe, ancient nations, and is a truth confirmed by the laws made for its regulation. Theſe laws prove, at the ſame time, both the antiquity, and power of muſic. "I agree with *Plato*, ſaith *Tully*, that no-"thing gains ſo eaſy an influx into ſoft and "tender minds, as the variety of notes uſed "in ſinging; and it is almoſt impoſſible to "ſpeak their influence. Wherefore ſome "*Grecians* carried their opinion ſo far, as "to think, that the laws of their muſic "could not well be changed, without a "change in the laws of their polity; and "that the effeminacy of their minds would "keep pace with that of their muſic, which "by its ſweetneſs and blandiſhments would "naturally corrupt them: or at leaſt the "introduction of effeminacy into their muſic "would be a proof, that their minds were "already depraved."[m] Theſe perhaps might in reality operate as mutual cauſes to each other: and the manners of a country may not improperly be judged of, by the nature of the muſic, with which they entertain themſelves. It will be the praiſe then of of our aſſembly this day, by our application of it to ſacred purpoſes, to have ſhewn, that

[m] De Legibus, Lib. II. Sect. 15.

however

however licentious or depraved our nation may be, yet we have *ſome* religion ſtill left in our country; to have demonſtrated, that whatever immoral minds may think, yet the delights of muſic are not neceſſarily confined to profane ſubjects only; nay, that muſic receives an additional dignity from the majeſty of the object, about which it is employed; and that it is never more delightful, than when engaged in the worſhip of the true God.

But wo be to him that applies it ill; or affixes the corrupt idea to it! the fault is not neceſſarily inherent in the nature of harmony, which of itſelf is innocent; but in the depraved imagination of the man, that abuſes, or miſapplies it, connecting it with vicious phraſes or corrupt ideas. I am hence then naturally led,

Thirdly, to a religious inference or two from the foregoing obſervations; and particularly to two precautions, which my ſubject neceſſarily ſuggeſts with regard to muſic in the houſe of God; one relative to the compoſer or performer, the other to the hearer.

Let the ſacred muſician then avoid, eſpecially in this audience-chamber of the Almighty, all ſuch levity of notes, as may tend to excite a levity of ideas before the awful

preſence of the King of kings. Let him carefully decline the introduction of all ſuch addreſſes to the paſſions in his notes, all ſuch complications of ſounds, as, having once been connected with words of levity, may naturally recall into light minds the remembrance of thoſe words or their ideas again.[n] Theſe evils let him ſeriouſly ſhun, as he would not *be partaker*, or a principal occaſion, *of other men's ſins*.

[n] Plato furniſhes many uſeful remarks and reflexions of caution ſuited to our preſent purpoſe, in his books *de republica*, and *de legibus*. He complains of a licence in his days, to the prejudice of the ſcience, of confounding injudiciouſly ſacred and profane muſic together; or of introducing the hymns to the Gods intermixed with other ſongs. At the ſame time he laments the ill effects, which too great licence indulged in their popular aſſemblies produced on the morals and civil deportment of the people.

Διηρημένη γὰρ τότε ἦν ἡμῖν ἡ μυσικὴ κατὰ εἴδη τε ἑαυτῆς ἄτλα καὶ σχήματα· καί τι ἦν εἶδος ᾠδῆς, εὐχαὶ πρὸς θεύς· ὄνομα δὲ ὕμνοι ἐπικαλοῦντο. Καὶ τούτῳ δὴ τὸ ἐναντίον ἦν ᾠδῆς ἕτερον εἶδος· θρήνους δὲ τὶς ἂν αὐτὸς μάλιστα ἐπαλεσε· καὶ παίωνες, ἕτερον· καὶ ἄλλο, Διονύσου γένεσις, οἶμαι, διθύραμβος λεγόμενος. Νόμες τε αὐτὸ τοῦτο τοῦνομα ἐκάλει, ᾠδὴν ὥς τινα ἑτέραν· ἐπέλεγον δὲ κιθαρῳδικὰς· τούτων δὴ διατεταγμένων, καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν, ἐκ ἐξῆν ἄλλῳ εἰ; ἄλλο καταχρῆσθαι μέλος εἶδος. —— Πρωϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου, ἄρχοντες μὲν τῶν ἀμούσων παρανομίας, ποιηταὶ ἐγίγνοντο, φύσει μὲν ποιητικοὶ, ἀγνώμονες δὲ περὶ τὸ δίκαιον τῶν μούσης καὶ τὸ νόμιμον, βακχεύοντες, καὶ μᾶλλον τοῦ δέοντος κατεχόμενοι ὑφ' ἡδονῆς· κεραννύντες δὲ θρήνους τε ὕμνοις, καὶ παίωνας διθυράμβοις· καὶ αὐλῳδίας δὴ ταῖς κιθαρῳδίαις μιμούμενοι, καὶ πάντα εἰς πάντα ξυνάγοντες, μυσικῆς ἄκοντες ὑπ' ἀνοίας καταψευδόμενοι· ὡς ὀρθότητα μὲν οὐκ ἔχοι οὐδ' ἡντινοῦν μυσικὴ, ἡδονῇ δὲ τῇ τοῦ χαίροντος, εἴτε βελτίων εἴτε χείρων ἂν εἴη τὶς, κρίνοιτο ὀρθοτάτη. — Ἐφεξῆς δὴ ταύτῃ τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡ τοῦ μὴ ἐθέλειν τοῖς ἄρχουσι δουλεύειν γίγνοιτ' ἄν· καὶ ἑπομένη ταύτῃ, φεύγειν πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς καὶ πρεσβυτέρων δουλείαν καὶ νουθέτησιν. Καὶ ἐγγὺς τοῦ τέλους ἴσι, νόμων ζητεῖν μὴ ὑπηκόους εἶναι. Πρὸς αὐτῷ δὲ ἤδη τῷ τέλει, ὅρκων καὶ πίστεων καὶ τοῦ παράπαν θεῶν μὴ φροντίζειν. — Plato *de legibus lib.* 3.

In

In the next place, let the hearer not indulge himſelf, in this houſe particularly, in the miſapplication of notes, which may have great merit of harmony in themſelves, if at any time ſuch notes ſhould injudiciouſly be introduced by an unequal or inadvertent performer, as have been once connected with odes of levity, or may ſeem to bear, in their coherence, too ſtrong a ſimilitude to ſome profane compoſitions. Let him rather ſtudy to adapt good ideas to the ſound, and thereby correct the judgment of the muſician. Far be it from chriſtians to convert the temple of the Lord into the reſemblance of a lewd theatre!

In ſhort, let the performer, and the hearer, only bring with them into the Houſe of God ſentiments becoming that place, a ſenſe of the divine majeſty, which is there preſent to ſee, and to hear, and to perceive, what they do, and ſpeak, and think; and then the former will be ſufficiently guarded againſt all ſuch ſeries of notes, as may expreſs levity, the minds of the latter will be raiſed above it.

The ſcale of harmony ſupplies muſic enough, that is grave, and ſolemn, and majeſtic, becoming the temple of the Lord of hoſts, adapted to raiſe, and to encourage all the affections required, or all the reſolutions

to

to be confirmed in that houſe. And the able, and judicious performer will not be deficient either in ſtore or choice of notes, that have a proper tendency. Let him only endeavour to raiſe in himſelf that flame of devotion, and feel that holy warmth of love within his own ſoul, which his duty requires him to communicate, and he need not fear but he will be ſucceſsful in his office. If he is willing that I ſhould penitently weep, he muſt himſelf be mournful: if he would have me contrite, he muſt himſelf be *lowly, and broken in ſpirit:* if he would exalt mine ideas to heavenly things, he muſt elevate his own; and himſelf aſcend to heaven in thought. For ſympathetic nature will compel me *to rejoice with the* harmony of *him that doth rejoice, and to weep with him that weepeth.*[o]

Pardon theſe ſhort ſuggeſtions before maſters of muſic ſo judicious, and a congregation ſo well diſpoſed; of which both hath given ſuch repeated proofs! Only go on to ſhew to the world, that ye are *not weary in well doing*[p]—and permit me now, after the long and favourable attention, which ye have given me, haſtily to conclude,

Fourthly and laſtly, with a word or two upon one main occaſion of our preſent meeting,

[o] Rom. xii. 15. [p] Galat. vi. 9.

ing, which will naturally reſult from the foregoing remarks.

The ſum of what hath already been obſerved is this: God hath formed the ſoul ſuſceptible of great delight in harmony: there is a natural ſympathy between ſounds and paſſions: gratitude then being an affection firſt exiſting in the ſoul, before it advances into outward action, is, like other paſſions, capable of being raiſed or encouraged by muſic: gratitude is exerted, in acts of love, either to the benefactor, where that is poſſible, or otherwiſe to the object manifeſtly beloved by the benefactor, as the higheſt mark of thankfulneſs, which we can ſhew unto him.

Now if inſtruments, which have neither ſenſe, nor life, nor motion of themſelves, can, when properly ſtruck, and acted upon, miniſter to our devotion, how much more muſt the united voice of a great congregation of intelligent, rational, thankful creatures, joining in ſpontaneous ſacred concert with the aid of inſtruments to praiſe and magnify the Lord, the father everlaſting, ſtir up and fire each other's breaſt, throughout the holy temple!

If any man then be deſirous to prove his ſenſe of harmony, and demonſtrate the judgment

ment of his ear for muſic, let him ſhew it in the proportion of his charity this day; in his generous contributions, while his breaſt by harmony is warmed into ſocial love, if it be capable of being warmed thereby! It will be the higheſt reflexion upon your hearts, and ears, if with all the advantages of ſacred melody, which ye this day enjoy, ye ſhall not be moved thereby to ſome diſtinguiſhed marks of gratitude to your almighty benefactor, in your liberality towards his beloved children. A ſhame will it be to us, to ſhew, that we have either an ear not to hear, or an heart not to feel; that we have neither an ear for muſic, nor an heart for compaſſion! But I am perſuaded, that I have obſerved better ears, and hearts in you, my brethren: only give proof before the churches of your judgment and goodneſs! Let not other churches rival you in the praiſes of charity, the greateſt of all chriſtian graces! But demonſtrate to thoſe, who object to our form of worſhip by church-muſic, the good effects thereof, and the reaſon we have of boaſting therein, upon your account!

If ye have any regard to the memory of thoſe, who have laboured among you *in the word and doctrine* of our common Lord and Saviour, *Jeſus Chriſt*, ſhew it in the only inſtance,

ſtance, wherein ye *can* ſhew it to them, who are removed out of your ſight, in your bounty to the diſtreſſed part of themſelves, which grieved them moſt at their departure out of this world; and whom chriſtianity, the love of God, and ſocial harmony recommends to your parental nurture, their poor afflicted children. Whatever ye do unto any of theſe little ones, ye will do it more abundantly unto *Chriſt*, inaſmuch as ye do it to the children of thoſe, who became poor, merely perhaps through their confinement to a profeſſion, which affords not ample reward enough to all to furniſh them with due proviſion for their families, that of preaching the goſpel of *Chriſt*. Among *you* they have laboured, and are taken away from the field of their labour; let the children reap the harveſt thereof, and feel that ye have profited by the exhortation of their fathers! Let not the heart of the widow, the mother of theſe children, be plaintive, while ye rejoice; but let the heart of the widow and her babes together leap this day for joy, and join with you in common ſongs of praiſe to the ever-living, univerſal Parent!

It hath often been lamented as the great misfortune of this nation, the happieſt in the world in all other reſpects, that it is too much

diſtracted

diſtracted by civil factions, and that mutual love is thereby too much overpowered, and ſometimes almoſt totally extinguiſhed. But it is the glory of this anniverſary aſſembly, and may it continue to be ſo, that it hath never been interrupted by any ſwellings of party. Charity hath ſtill flouriſhed in this your land, and hath here had *her perfect work*. Here, without diſtinction, perſons of different civil denominations have met together in uniſon, to be beneficent. This ſolemnity hath reconciled, or overwhelmed, as it were, all diſſonance of party jars, or party jealouſies, and made even diſcords, like certain notes of muſic, unite in harmony.

May your only emulation and jealouſy continue to be ſhewn in doing good, and in *provoking each other unto good works!*[q] This will be a laudable emulation before men: this will be a pleaſure, remaining with the ſoul, to be recalled at will, through every ſcene of her exiſtence: for this will be an acceptable ſervice in the ſight of God, and, added to other virtues, will ſecure to you his everlaſting favour and loving kindneſs. In order therefore that your minds may be fully actuated to the accompliſhment of this great work, let every inſtrument of melody, and

[q] Heb. x. 24.

act

act of praiſe be joined now before him in the religious concert! *Praiſe him in the ſound of the trumpet; praiſe him upon the lute and harp; praiſe him upon the well tuned cymbals; praiſe him upon the loud cymbals! Let every thing that hath breath*, whether vocal, or inſtrumental, whether natural, or inſpired by man, but above all, this day, let the united harmony of your beneficence *praiſe the Lord!*[r]

[r] Pſ. cl.

DISCOURSE II.

The Nature, Evidences, and Importance of Truth, conſidered.—— Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, *November* 30th. 1754. Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houſes.

JOHN XVIII. 38.

Pilate *ſaith unto Him, what is Truth?*

WITH this queſtion a *Roman* deputy once left the court of judicature, having ſat upon the moſt important cauſe, that was ever tried upon earth, without waiting for a reply. And with ſimilar ſentiments, a late noble declaimer in favour of ſcepticiſm hath given but too great reaſon to ſuſpect, that he left the world; inattentive

to former vindications offered for the annals of revealed truth; not permitted by the limits of natural conſtitution to wait any longer for a reply.[a]

It is much to be lamented by every ſerious well-wiſher to mankind, eſpecially by thoſe, who are appointed inſtructors in the word of truth, and have the information of the human intellect more particularly the object of their concern, that a ſpirit of pyrrhoniſm is grown ſo prevalent in the preſent age. We have lived to ſee, within the ſpace of a few years, the moſt obvious truths diſputed, not only in religion, but in all points of ſcience. Different motives may have excited the debates; while ſome have proceeded upon too refined a philoſophy, without any intention of doing miſchief; the ſprings of controverſy in others may not have ſo good a plea in their behalf.

The very exiſtence of all ſubſtances, whether material or immaterial has been the ſubject of queſtion, between authors of a different genius in thinking: ſome of whom have queried, whether our ſenſes may not deceive us in their reports concerning the reality of all corporeal objects; others have doubted, whether our intellects may not deceive us in

[a] See the Philoſophical Works of the late Lord Bolingbroke.

their

their abſtract reaſoning about the exiſtence of any immaterial ſubſtances. Thus would theſe two ſpecies of writers joined together take between them every being both material, and immaterial out of the world at once. Although none of their proofs, by which they would eſtabliſh their conceits, can be more clear than this, that *ſomething* muſt exiſt, becauſe we are conſcious that we ourſelves exiſt. And if we give up all evidence of ſenſe, we muſt give up at the ſame time the firſt inlets, and all the common evidence of truth, upon which men act in general.

Some have denied the firſt principles of mathematical ſcience: more the foundations of moral and religious ſcience. The attributes of the Deity, which one would think almoſt next to ſelf-evident truths, perhaps *are ſo* to beings of ſuperior intellects to ourſelves, being objects of their immediate intuition, have been brought into queſtion by thoſe who thought themſelves wiſe among men, becauſe it is ſaid we cannot adequately comprehend them in the abſtract.

No wonder then, that the noble writer, who in his *firſt Philoſophy* is ſo free in his reflexions upon the firſt principles of ſcience, ſo dubious about the neceſſary perfections of the author of all ſcience, ſhould in a prior

work offered to the public, which will principally furniſh me with remarks for the ſubject of this and a following diſcourſe, have endeavoured to take away all ground of credit from ancient hiſtorical narration, which admits only a degree of evidence much inferior to the former; eſpecially much inferior to mathematical proof. The paſſions too, and worldly purſuits of mankind are much leſs intereſted, and their prepoſſeſſions leſs likely to be alarmed by the abſtract deductions of a geometrical propoſition, than by more nearly affecting points of moral and hiſtorical ſpeculation. If the firſt principles of *mathematical* light then cannot eſcape the darkening clouds of controverſy, need we wonder, that *hiſtorical* faith, whether civil or religious, ſhould ſuffer reproach under the tainting hands of the ſceptick?

Amidſt theſe clouds of controverſies, and controverting writers, puzzled by the mazes, into which various ſophiſtries have led them, without a proper light or clue of reaſon to conduct them through the labyrinth, many ſeem to grow indifferent about any truth, or rather diſpoſed to aſk in the words of *Pilate*, *what is truth*? Some men ſeem almoſt tempted to think of truth, what *Brutus* ſaid once of virtue, "that ſhe is only a mere name, not a "reality."

The

The misfortune is, that where men ſet out with denying firſt principles in any ſcience, there remains nothing plainer to convince them. For ſome principles in moral and religious ſcience, like ſome propoſitions in mathematicks, ſeem, as it were, only to be demonſtrated *ex abſurdo*; i. e. from the abſurdity of admitting a contrary ſuppoſition, or of imagining them not to be true. It is dangerous therefore for young minds to ſet out with ſuch denials, or ſcruples about ſuch truths: becauſe it may be difficult for them to draw out the chain of reaſoning, that ſhall demonſtrate to them the abſurdity. A further misfortune therefore hath ariſen, that *ſome* by early, or haſtily imbibed prejudices have blinded themſelves to all important truths: they have voluntary ſhut their eyes againſt the light; or elſe *ſeeing, they will not ſee, and hearing they will not underſtand.*[b]

Amidſt ſuch difficulties and diſcouragements, what can the friend of truth, or miniſter of the goſpel of truth attempt with hopes of ſucceſs? *If the foundations be caſt down* what can the preacher of righteouſneſs do to reform mankind, or to reeſtabliſh them in moral equity? where can the diſpenſer of

[b] Luke VIII. 10.

revealed

revealed truth begin, but by endeavouring to give men a ſenſe of truth; to inform them of its nature; to ſatisfy them of its evidence; to convince them of its importance; to infer its obligations; to guide them gently into its paths; to perſuade them, if they *can* be perſuaded, that truth, and eſpecially *ſacred* truth has a direct tendency to promote their ſureſt intereſt, both as individuals, and as ſocial beings: becauſe it will lead them to act as the nature of things, whereunto they ſtand related, and as their own nature requires; in the due diſcipline, gratification, and improvement of which their real happineſs is placed.

Whereas man, being of a compound frame, is too apt to indulge one part of his nature in oppoſition to the other; which is one ſource of voluntary oppoſition to truth; nay is itſelf an actual oppoſition to truth. It is a ſpontaneous oppoſition to what the real nature of things exiſting within ourſelves requires. For all error is not involuntary. But let men conſider, that as all truth is founded in the nature and relations of things, ſo conſequently muſt it be ſomething real. Thus founded, and thus real, it muſt be important; if it be important to act according to the natural

cauſes

cauſes of felicity, inſtituted by the Deity in the nature of the things which he created.

All truths indeed may not be equally *important*; though all equally *real*. *Religious* truth muſt be important: becauſe it relates to the firſt author of being, and ſovereign diſpoſer of happineſs, and our duty to him, with whom we principally have to do; and on whoſe favour the whole ſum of our welfare depends. Religious truth is the right foundation of true moral conduct, with which happineſs is connected in the natural order of things.

It will not therefore, I hope, be thought unſeaſonable in the preſent times, eſpecially before the younger part of this audience, that they may not be drawn aſide from the purſuit of truth, even of *probable*, *hiſtorical* truth, by unreaſonable, inconſiſtent, and ill-ſupported ſuſpicions or ſurmiſes raiſed againſt it, to inquire, in this, and a ſubſequent diſcourſe,

Firſt, wherein truth conſiſts; and what are the different capacities, and qualifications requiſite for the ready perception thereof;

Secondly, what are its different kinds of evidence;

Thirdly, into the importance of truth;

Fourthly, into the injury they do to ſociety, who ſtudy by deluſive ſophiſtries to invalidate its evidence; and likewiſe into ſome few inconſiſtences of a late writer, who has endeavoured to undermine, or deſtroy the force of all probable argument;

Laſtly, what inferences may be drawn, under each diſcourſe, ſuitable to this place and audience.

Firſt then, truth conſiſts in conjoining thoſe ideas, whoſe objects ſtand united in nature; or in disjoining thoſe, whoſe objects mutually diſagree, according to the ſeveral agreements or diſagreements, the ſeveral habitudes, connexions, or relations of objects to each other. Wherever this conjunction, or ſeparation is made according to nature, there is truth. The reverſe of theſe conjunctions or ſeparations is falſehood. Hence we ſee, that for the adequate diſcovery of truth, juſt and proper ideas of the objects muſt be acquired. Hence alſo we learn the difficulty of diſcerning truth, and the origin of many errors. Where the ideas of objects are imperfect, the apprehenſion of their ſeveral relations

to each other will for the moſt part be obſcure, frequently confuſed, in few caſes very clear and determinate. Where the ideas are falſe, the conjunctions of them will in moſt caſes neceſſarily be wrong; or right only by accident.

Hence we ſee, that myſterious truths, or myſteries, as ſuch, will be relative merely to the intellects, that are employed about them. Thus the ſame truth ſhall be evident to the underſtanding of a ſuperior being, or to one of the ſame rank converſant in that particular branch of ſcience, of which an inferior or uncultivated intellect ſhall have very little, or perhaps no conception.

Hence we ſee likewiſe how ſtrong prepoſſeſſions, or invincible prejudices may ariſe. Men of quick parts, and lively apprehenſions are apt to receive haſty images of things. A confuſed medium, undue diſtances, or indiſpoſed organs are apt to occaſion wrong impreſſions. Perſons of ſuch a genius are apt to compound haſtily ſimple ideas, or ſuch as are nearly ſimple, frequently imperfect ones, into more obſcure and imperfect complex ideas; deviating ſtill further from the relations of nature. An apparent ſimilitude ſhall give occaſion for a conjunction, where the realities are averſe. This latter is that work of the mind,

mind, which is called imagination or fancy; and the product thereof is what is frequently ſtiled wit. Now where lively intellects have received impreſſions, and conjoined ideas, they chuſe not the pains of altering thoſe impreſſions, of analyzing their ideas, or amending their complex notions. If organs indiſpoſed have repreſented *bitter for ſweet*, or *ſweet for bitter*,[c] the objects will always be judged of, for the future, by the firſt injurious miſrepreſentation from the report of ill-diſpoſed ſenſes.

Thus complex ideas neceſſarily correſpond to ſimple ones; and falſe judgments attend upon falſe complexions of ideas. Objects at a diſtance are haſtily judged of by objects near: thoſe that are inviſible, by thoſe, with which we are daily converſant. Many have been miſtaken in their determinations of this ſort. Some have given the reins too far to imagination, which, as hath been obſerved, is nothing further than a free indulgence of the mind in haſty conjunctions or ſeparations, on account of apparent ſimilitudes or diſſimilitudes: others for this reaſon have grown too jealous, doubtful, or ſceptical about any truth; whoſe intellects, if rightly applied,

[c] Iſai. v. 20.

had

had been capable of more ſatisfactory information. Hence the pyrrhoniſt perceiving that men may be deceived in ſome things, will pretend to judge of none: bigotted nevertheleſs at the ſame time in his determinations againſt the judgment of others: diſtruſting every thing maintained by others: and, rather than his principle of ſceptiſm ſhall give way to the authority of divine revelation, he will perſuade himſelf, that *nothing* is divinely revealed. It is ſurprizing how far men out of humour with the world, and with themſelves, will proceed in their jealouſies, and captious queries, and ſophiſtries againſt truth. Eſpecially where truth interferes with the uſual courſe of their own moral conduct.

But it is no wonder, that they, whoſe practice has long run counter to all eſtabliſhed notions of goodneſs and juſtice, ſhould maintain that goodneſs and juſtice are ſomewhat entirely different in the ſupreme being from what they are in *them*; and therefore that we can have no conception of moral attributes in the Deity; or of divine goodneſs and juſtice. It is true indeed, theſe attributes ought to be ſomewhat different in the Deity from what they are in *them*: their own practice muſt have ſuggeſted this. But then the conſequence is very unphiloſophical. "Of divine goodneſs and divine

"juſtice,"

" juſtice," ſaith our author,[d] " I am unable " to frame any adequate notions from God's " works :" therefore it ſeems, they are not to be admitted as any principles at all of reaſoning. The argument amounts to this: of divine goodneſs and juſtice, we have no idea, becauſe we have not an adequate one. This is certainly a very ſtrained concluſion.

It is true indeed, we may not know, what either goodneſs or juſtice is, as exiſting in the divine nature, ſo far as to comprehend the whole plan or idea of it exiſting in the divine mind; we may not comprehend all its excellence; all the ſentiments, if I may ſo call them, or motives attending the exerciſe of it in the Deity: ſo far we may not underſtand it in the abſtract, if this may be called not underſtanding it in the abſtract, or its abſolute eſſence. But ſtill we know, what *good* and *juſt* are in the concrete, as relative to created beings. We feel the effects of what we univerſally call, and underſtand by the words *goodneſs* and *juſtice:* we have the ſame idea of them in general, all the world over, whereſoever, or in whatſoever being they are ſaid to exiſt; and if they are not ſomewhat analogous to what we daily expe-

[d] See the Philoſophical Works.

rience,

rience, in vain do we reaſon about any attributes or diſtant properties either of *wiſdom* or *power*; which he ſeems to acknowledge, and *them* only, in the *Deity*.

For if wiſdom conſiſts in contriving a fit end, or proper means tending to that end; goodneſs conſiſts in contriving an end, that tends to the happineſs of every object, that is not unworthy of it; juſtice conſiſts in giving to every creature what is right, and due to it. So far we underſtand what we mean by either in the abſtract. And we ſee tendencies enough of this kind in nature to give us ample demonſtration of goodneſs and juſtice in the author of nature. We ſee the ſame effects are produced, as by the attributes which we term juſtice and goodneſs: if the end is by free and immoral agents ſometimes obſtructed, or prevented, and this is made by him an objection to the acknowledgment of moral attributes in the Deity; we might as well on this account queſtion what he calls the *natural* attributes, which are the only ones, that he ſeems willing to acknowledge; we might as well queſtion wiſdom in the deſign, or power in the execution, as goodneſs in the intention, or juſtice in the diſtribution. We might as well ſuppoſe an imperfection of counſel in proportioning

means

means to the deſign, or inability to ſupport thoſe means, as a defect of will to intend, or to diſtribute general felicity. Thus upon the ſame principles, or rather denial of all principles, we might give up all the attributes of the Deity at once: from whence the tranſition will be very eaſy into doubtfulneſs about the exiſtence of a firſt cauſe to deſign or execute at all; and about the reality of all knowledge: even of our author's *firſt Philoſophy*. For a Deity acting by chance will be little better than the ancient doctrine of chance without a Deity.

This will tend haſtily to univerſal ſcepticiſm; if there can be any ſuch thing as *univerſal* ſcepticiſm: hardly indeed *can* there be, upon a little ſerious conſideration. For one thing *muſt* be granted, in oppoſition to the ancient doctrine of *no-certainty*; this muſt be *true* however, whether we perceive it or not; that things are, as they really are: this *muſt* be true, ſuppoſing any thing at all exiſtent; whether there be any intelligent being to perceive it or not; yet our own exiſtence ſeems to prove intelligent exiſtence. If they do exiſt, there is ſuch a thing as truth: they *do*, and *have* exiſted, in ſuch, or ſuch a manner; or elſe they have exiſted, and not exiſted, or been nothing, at the ſame time;

time; which is abſurd. To ſay this, will be to give up all knowledge at once. If they *do*, and *have* exiſted in ſuch, or ſuch a manner, they certainly become objects of knowledge: and certainly deſerve our examination, as far as we ſtand related to them; as far as experience hath taught men, that they affect mankind. Here hiſtorical knowledge begins to have its merit; as containing the annals of experience, or paſt exiſtence, and ſhewing how moral agents have been affected by the beings that ſurrounded them.

But to proceed in our inquiries concerning the qualifications requiſite for the perception of truth; we may obſerve further, that as natural appetites may be depraved by irregular indulgences, ſo natural organs may thereby be corrupted, impaired, and diſqualified for the right reception of juſt and adequate ideas. The jaundiced eye will admit every ray of light with a yellow tincture. If this tincture be attended to in the conſequent operations of the mind, falſe judgments will be paſſed upon every viſible object before us. It is no wonder, that the eye of the *immoral ſoul* ſhould be jaundiced to every ray of religious truth, which enters with full directions to moral virtue. Evidence therefore will be called in queſtion, which is naturally clear,

clear, but only obſerved through a vicious medium. And as the rays of evidence, like the rays of ſolar light, come with different degrees of ſtrength and moment, thoſe which proceed with leſs degrees of progreſſive force, will, in their paſſage through different mediums, be further refracted out of the ſtrait natural line, and turned from the way of truth. This remark leads us,

Secondly, to make ſome few obſervations upon the different evidences of truth.

Theſe depend upon the different nature of the objects, from whoſe relations it reſults, compared with the intellects employed about them. There are objects, whoſe relations are ſeen by immediate intuition. There are abſtract truths, which are ſelf-evident, as ſoon as propoſed to the mind: which by a kind of violence, as it were, conſtrain aſſent; the will of the Deity thus ordaining in the very formation of the ſoul, and its reflections upon its own ideas. There are other truths, which flow by neceſſary conſequence from this intuitive knowledge, or theſe ſelf-evident propoſitions; ſo that if the one be true, the other muſt be true alſo. Such are all the truths evinced by what we call demonſtrative evidence.

dence. Again there is knowledge which recedes ſtill further from intuition, from ſelf-evidence, or demonſtration; which yet has all the evidence of truth, that the nature of things will admit; and truth being founded in the nature of things, greater ſurely cannot be expected, than is conſiſtent with that nature in which it exiſts: though this inferior kind of evidence then does not infer a propoſition to be ſo neceſſarily true, as that the contrary thereto ſhould involve a neceſſary abſurdity, yet this muſt be received as knowledge, for the neceſſary ends of life, and action, and happineſs. This is called *moral* aſſurance, *moral* certainty, *moral* evidence, or probability. Of this kind are all thoſe truths, whoſe evidence depends upon the teſtimony of others; teſtimony, whether divine, or human. The former muſt riſe in its authority above the latter in proportion, as it is more ſtrongly proved to be divine: foraſmuch as we know, that an all-perfect being will not proclaim a falſhood, neither will he deceive his creatures.

Here then *ſacred* hiſtory begins to have its weight. For an hiſtorical narration of facts already paſt, whatever our author may think of it, may certainly be inſpired, as well as a prophetic prediction of facts yet to come.

All theſe degrees, and ſpecies of knowledge have their reſpective ends, and uſes, and evidence; and whether acquired by intuition, by deductions of reaſon, by teſtimony, or by immediate inſpiration, are all dependent upon faculties given by him, who is the God of knowledge. If the Deiſt rightly conſidered this, he might be leſs inclined to boaſt of the ſufficiency of his own reaſon ſet in competition with immediate inſpiration from God, the author of his reaſon likewiſe. For both are derived from God, either mediately or immediately. The difference only is, that whereas one is derived in an ordinary way, and operates and advances according to the common courſe of nature; the other is conveyed in a way equally eaſy to its author, though extraordinary and ſupernatural with reſpect to man.

And if any perſon ſhall object to inſpiration, becauſe it is uncommon, or ſupernatural, let him prove, if he can, any abſurdity in the ſuppoſition, that the author of intellect may, for extraordinary moral purpoſes, communicate much greater degrees of knowledge to *one* ſoul than to *another*, or much clearer knowledge, or more diſtinguiſhing faculties, to one than to another; or knowledge in a much clearer and more immediate *manner* to one

one than to another: to ſay that a thing is uncommon, or extraordinary, is far from proving, that it is not real.

But we may obſerve likewiſe further, with regard to our author's very contemptuous treatment of the ſtudy of almoſt any truth, except hiſtorical, that all truths may not be equally uſeful any more than their objects; nor all equally applicable to the common offices of life in proportion to their evidence, or ſeveral degrees of certainty. Some terminate merely in ſpeculation, eſpecially with reſpect to moſt minds converſant about them. Some, the further they recede from abſtract ſpeculation, and the more they are applied to outward objects, and intermix with common affairs of the world, the more ſerviceable they become to mankind. This is the caſe of mathematical truths, of late years applied to experimental reſearches and diſcoveries.

The uſefulneſs of all *hiſtorical* truth cannot be more ſtrongly illuſtrated, than in the encomiums paſſed upon it by the late noble writer already alluded to; who yet has proceeded further in his endeavours to undermine the credit of all ancient hiſtory, than any writer that ever undertook to ſpeak the praiſes of all hiſtorical inquiry, and to make hiſtory almoſt the only kind of ſcience worth

our ſtudy. Let us obſerve the precautions with which he ſets out.

" To diſſolve the charm of impoſitions or " enchanted caſtles in hiſtory, ſaith he, we " muſt begin at the beginning of them; we " muſt examine ſcrupulouſly the foundations, " on which they lean." [d] But what if afterwards he allows no authority of ancient hiſtories yet remaining, by which they are to be examined, or on which we may lean in our reſearches? What if all ſuch laborious examinations, and collations of parallel places in various ancient hiſtorians, which is the only accurate way " of examining ſcrupu- " louſly, from the beginning," is called by him, " only filling our heads with learned " lumber?" [e] Shall the authority of all ancient hiſtory be tried by the verdict of mere modern inquiſition, without any deference to the examinations or judgment of our anceſtors in all preceding ages? Or can it be tried by thoſe our anceſtors in ſcience, without peruſing, canvaſſing, or paying any regard to the works, which they have left us? " We " are to begin at the beginning:" and yet, it ſeems, there is no original authority, no collateral teſtimony from the beginning to

[d] See Letters on the ſtudy of hiſtory, Vol. I. p. 8, 9.
[e] Ib. p. 8, 9.

ſuppoſe

ſupport us. The young pupil in the ſcience of the world is to ſtudy *univerſal* hiſtory: In order to be perfect in this ſtudy, "he is to "begin at the beginning, and to examine "ſcrupulouſly:" and yet within a very few lines he is admoniſhed by the ſame author, rather to admit all the "anachroniſms of a "*Jewiſh* chronologer, than fill his head with "learned lumber," by examining all that contemporary writers have ſaid upon ancient ſubjects. Such is the conſiſtency of this noble tutor's directions and admonitions in the very threſhold of his work, from whence he ſets forwards in his exhortations to the ſtudy of hiſtory! And thus far may be ſufficient to have remarked upon his advice at preſent.

It is an eaſy matter to declaim againſt the credit of hiſtory, ſacred, or profane: but we may juſtly query, whether it be ſo conſiſtent with this author's plan to derogate ſo much from the authority of ancient hiſtory, at the very time, when he is exhorting his pupil to the ſtudy of *univerſal* hiſtory, and to "be-"gin at the beginning." For as much as there is no period of time, whoſe events have not connexions, either mediate or immediate, with thoſe of former times, till we arrive at the firſt æra of all things.

He ſeems to deſpiſe, and would by artful inſinuation bring into contempt many, if not moſt other beneficial ſtudies, in which he hath not been himſelf ſo freely converſant, as abſolutely uſeleſs: "as only a ſpecious, "and ingenious ſort of idleneſs," ſuch are his words, "a kind of creditable ignorance, as "tending neither to make us better citizens, "nor better men." [f] This ſeems to be all the emolument, which he thinks the generality of men reap even from the ſtudy of hiſtory, the advantage of a falſe eſteem, ariſing from a "creditable ignorance."

"An application to any ſtudy, that tends "neither directly, nor indirectly, to make us "better men and better citizens," [g] under which cenſure, compared with other paſſages of his writings, he ſeems deſirous artfully to include moſt of the graver, ſpeculative, uſeful ſtudies; "every application of this kind," ſaith he, "is but a ſpecious, and ingenious "ſort of idleneſs, and the knowledge we ac-"quire by it is a creditable kind of ignorance, "nothing more. This creditable kind of ig-"norance is, in my opinion, the whole be-"nefit, which the generality of men, even "of the moſt learned, reap from the ſtudy

[f] Ib. p. 14, 15, &c. compared. [g] Pag. 14, 15.

"of

"of hiſtory; and yet the ſtudy of hiſtory "ſeems to me, of all other, the moſt proper "to train us up to private, and public vir-"tue." He had but a very few lines before ridiculed the "drudgery of grammarians and "critics;"[h] by whoſe labours nevertheleſs great improvement has been made of late years in claſſical learning; great light been reflected even upon that part of it, which conveys to us ancient hiſtory, and opens the view of claſſical antiquity. The learned inquirer into ancient days, and ſearcher of æras, the induſtrious antiquarian and chronologer, together with the very laborious lexicographer, had not eſcaped his ſevere notice: though chronology has been always juſtly eſteemed the handmaid to hiſtory, and the lexicographer furniſheth us with the key to ancient languages, in which hiſtory is tranſmitted down to us.

But to take no further notice here, how much he derogates at the ſame time from the only ſtudy that he allows, one might beg leave to aſk, what kind of inquiry after truth is there to be conceived, that can be pronounced abſolutely, and entirely uſeleſs; that has not in ſome ſenſe or other, either directly, or in-

[h] P. 4—9.

directly,

directly, a tendency to improve, and make men wiſer, and better, and conſequently happier; better as individuals, and conſequently better members of ſociety? Every refinement of the human intellect is a kind of melioration of the natural mind. Induſtry in our purſuits of knowledge may, at leaſt, be a guard of virtue, if it is nothing more; and by being an employment in that which is harmleſs, may be a ſecurity from falling into that which is vicious. For the mind *muſt* be employed ſome way or other. And the amuſements in the ſearch of truths, which are not of importance, if we can ſay what are not, may be exerciſes of the intellect, intended for its employment, to keep it from ſtagnation in indolence, as the body has its different kinds of exerciſe, for the preſervation of its health, and vigour.

I ſhould now therefore proceed to make ſome few remarks upon the importance of truth, of whatever nature its evidence may be, and to conſider the injury which they do to ſociety, who ſtudiouſly endeavour to invalidate the evidence and authority of truth in general: adding ſome few further obſervations upon the inconſiſtency of the noble writer's objections to all common evidence of hiſtorical truth, with his only plan of uſeful ſtudy.

ſtudy. But to ſatisfy theſe heads, would tire your patience too much at preſent. I ſhall beg leave therefore to reſerve them for the ſubject of another diſcourſe; and ſhall conclude this with a ſhort inference from what has hitherto been obſerved, ſuitable to this time and place.

It is the creditable province of thoſe, who reſide in theſe ſeats of literature, to be employed in the purſuit or communication of truth. This was the good and pious intention of thoſe, who firſt fixed, and endowed theſe ſeats, to prepare young perſons for the future inveſtigation, or promulgation of ſalutary truths, important to man, whether conſidered in his natural, moral, civil, or religious capacity: for in each of theſe capacities truth highly affects him. In the fuller proſecution of this deſign, you will be differently engaged, according to your different ſtations or provinces hereafter aſſigned you by providence in life. But then remember, there are univerſal principles, common to all, to be imbibed in ſeaſon, within theſe nurſeries of ſcience, as elements of future vegetation in knowledge: the elements of future vegetation, if I may ſo call it, to opening minds; which will be diverſified by their future neceſſary employments. Endeavour therefore

to

to prepare yourſelves betimes for theſe employments, by treaſuring up in the ſpring of life a proper ſtore of principles, by laying a good foundation of elemental literature. For, if you are hereafter to ſearch for materials, when you ought to build; or begin to build without a ſolid foundation, the ſuperſtructure will go on but heavily, and the edifice itſelf be tottering and unſteady; ready to be ſhaken down by the firſt blaſt of oppoſing wind, becauſe it is founded upon the ſand.

Various occupations and profeſſions in life will hereafter require in you various kinds of knowledge, and principles well eſtabliſhed in various kinds of truth: eſpecially in an age, which ſets up for maſterſhip in ſcience. Let no man too haſtily, or contemptuouſly deſpiſe that truth in purſuit of which his neighbour is engaged. For all truth will be of uſe to moral agents; all at leaſt, when diſcovered, will be pleaſing to intellectual beings. Univerſal ſcepticiſm muſt be a kind of gloomy maze. Truth is the object of all ſcience: and certain acknowledged principles of truth are the only light, by which the traveller in ſcience can direct his ſteps. The attainment, and illuſtration of truth will be the principal aim of every one engaged in any profeſſion of ſcience, who acts with honour, and conſiſtently

ently with duty in his profeſſion. If every one were ſincerely to make this his aim, and to conduct himſelf uniformly according to the directions, and conſequences of truth diſcovered, whenſoever, or howſoever made known, whether by reaſon, or by revelation, without any bias of prejudice, immoral appetite, or hypocriſy, the reſult muſt redound to the glory of God, and the welfare of ſociety; in which the welfare of each individual muſt neceſſarily be included.

That we may all, according to our reſpective ſtations in the body ſocial, conſider, examine, and act thus, looking upon ourſelves at the ſame time as created, dependent, and therefore concerned to be religious, as well as ſocial beings, God of his infinite mercy and aſſiſtance grant through the merits of Chriſt Jeſus, and the guidance of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

DISCOURSE III.

The Nature, Evidence, and Importance of Truth, conſidered.—— Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, *Dec.* 1, 1754. Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Vice-Chancellor, and Heads of Houſes.

JOHN XVIII. 38.

Pilate *ſaith unto Him, what is Truth?*

WHATEVER might have been the intention of *Pilate* in aſking this queſtion, whether merely to ſcoff at our Saviour's doctrine, or to cavil, where he had nothing reaſonable to object; we find it was not aſked with a deſire of information: for he did not wait for a reply. How lightly ſoever

ſoever perſons in ſubſequent ages may have thought upon the ſubject, yet one point is well worthy of their notice, that truth is deeply founded in the nature and relations of things: and it will have its weight, and influence on our happineſs, whether we eſteem it, or not. It conſiſts in aſſertions or denials made according to nature and the relations of objects, according to their agreements or diſagreements with each other. The juſtice or rectitude of theſe aſſertions, or denials, and the conſequent perſuaſions ariſing from them will have a ſtrong effect upon moral action: and moral action is cloſely connected with natural happineſs or miſery.

What one kind of truth or falſhood is, truth in common converſation, and how great its importance in ſocial life; we are all pretty well ſenſible, even without a definition. We know it to be a repreſentation of things, or facts, as they really are: falſhood the reverſe. We are no leſs ſenſible of the ill effects ariſing from a general violation of truth in common life. Yet wherein is the principal harm ariſing from hence, but that it draws our fellow beings into falſe perſuaſions concerning things to which they ſtand related, into conſequent miſconduct, and error of action, in the common concerns of life? And

And if truth current in common converſation be of ſuch moment, ſhall not truth recorded in writing be judged of equal concern at leaſt? the violation or miſrepreſentation of it be eſteemed an equal treſpaſs upon mutual confidence? for what are books, but written language, or written converſation addreſſed to the world, inſtead of ſingle perſons? and may not falſhood propagated, or truth miſrepreſented therein, be much more fatally miſchievous, as the venom may become more diffuſed? This ſhould excite men to be zealous in the defence of truth, for the common benefit of mankind, of individuals, and the body ſocial.

Probable truth, we know, is at beſt oftentimes hardly to be diſcerned; eſpecially where objects are but imperfectly known, and conſequently the relations are but obſcurely ſeen. This is the foundation of myſteries to inferior underſtandings like thoſe of men, which to ſuperior capacities are well-comprehended truths. Yet, even with reſpect to the inferior faculties, there may be evidence enough to ſatisfy, that the relations of objects exiſt, though there is not ability enough to comprehend perfectly, or perſpicuity enough to demonſtrate mathematically, the manner *how* they exiſt. But what can be the merit of

ſtudying

ſtudying to perplex truth, where open ſignatures of reality are found, if there *be* ſuch a thing as reality? It will be our prudence then, the diſcretion at leaſt of thoſe who are juſt entering upon the ſtage of knowledge and experience, to be upon their guard againſt ſuch authors, as argue againſt principles acknowledged in all preceding ages. It will be their juſt caution at leaſt, not to deny truths by hypotheſis, or merely upon a principle of adherence to ſome ſceptical author. For is it more probable, to inſtance only in *one* caſe, that hiſtorians of all ages ſhould have been determined voluntary impoſtors, or that the man who could aſſert, or ſurmiſe ſuch general deluſion to be, if I may ſo expreſs it, impoſed by whole-ſale, ſhould have been himſelf grievouſly out of humour with mankind, extremely jealous, or extremely prejudiced againſt his fellow-creatures, to ſuſpect ſo heavily their opinions or their honeſty?

In my laſt diſcourſe upon the words of the text I propoſed to inquire,

Firſt, wherein truth conſiſts; and what are the different capacities, and qualifications requiſite for the ready perception thereof;

Secondly,

Secondly, what are its different kinds of evidence;

Thirdly, into the importance of truth;

Fourthly, into the injury they do to ſociety, who ſtudy by deluſive ſophiſtries to invalidate its evidence; and likewiſe into ſome few inconſiſtencies of a late writer, who has endeavoured to undermine, or deſtroy the force of all probable argument;

Laſtly, what inferences may be drawn, under each diſcourſe, ſuitable to this place and audience.

It hath been obſerved then, in my former diſcourſe, that the evidences of truth are different, according to its different kinds of objects correſpondent in nature: conſequently he, who demands a different kind of evidence from that which the nature of things admits, is unreaſonable; becauſe he acts inconſiſtently with the nature and relations of things, which require his aſſent. For evidences are not always proportioned to the importance of the truth propoſed. Hiſtory admits only of *probable* evidence, yet the importance of hiſtory is univerſal. It is one of the great privileges of a rational being, agreeably to the ſenti-

ments of a learned heathen,[a] to compare the paſt with the preſent, and from thence in the connective chain of events to infer the future.

Ancient patriarchal hiſtory, as recorded in the books of *Moſes*, may perhaps be thought by ſome to have little relation to *us:* but ſurely whatever comes to us with divine credentials, as a revelation of the will of the Creator from the Creator himſelf, muſt be of conſequence. As it ſerves to diſtinguiſh ſome of the firſt æras of the world, but eſpecially as far as it points at goſpel truth, and contains any thing predictive or prefigurative of goſpel revelation, it muſt be of greater moment. All ſucceeding hiſtory, as it opens gradually, till it arrives at the full diſplay of this revelation, muſt be of the higheſt importance, as it is one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of the divine original of the goſpel, drawn from the completion of prophecies, the accompliſhment of ancient types and figures. This leads us then,

Thirdly, to make ſome few remarks upon the importance of truth, whatever its evidence may be.

And here nothing can be ſaid of it more important than this, that truth is the light

[a] Tull. de Officiis.

and

and guide of life. Whoſoever walketh in ignorance, walketh in darkneſs, and knoweth not whither he goeth. Therefore was *Jeſus* called *the light of the world*,[b] becauſe he came to reveal, *and bear witneſs unto the truth.* As truth is founded in the nature of things, and is cloſely inherent in their very eſſence; ſo happineſs muſt be connected with it: foraſmuch as happineſs muſt ariſe from the conformity of our nature to the intentions of objects with which we are connected. Falſe notions of objects therefore lead men into falſe purſuits of happineſs, and are the great foundations of diſappointment, which is the ground of miſery.

Truth then, and true conceptions of things, ought to be the firſt and prevailing object of our purſuit, in the purſuit of true felicity. Its importance may not always be proportioned to its evidence; nor conſequently is it neceſſary that *every* ſtudy ſhould be equally important to *every* man, any more than that *every* truth ſhould be ſo. Relations to different objects will make different truths important. Raſhly therefore doth he argue, who would have all men engaged in the purſuit of only one, and the ſame truth. How-

[b] John viii. 12.

ever *one* there is univerſally neceſſary, and the purſuit of that one, will certainly denote the higheſt diſcretion and prudence, which conducts to the moſt ſolid, and permanent happineſs. The ſtudy of revelation, if God hath made a revelation, (and ſurely it muſt be of conſequence to moral agents to inquire, whether the Creator hath revealed his will or not,) muſt be the moſt intereſting of all ſtudies. It is the advantage of the generality of thoſe who have the happineſs to be educated in this place, that their time is dedicated to this moſt *important* ſtudy, for ſo we may venture to ſtile it, as in one place it is ſo ſtiled by our author himſelf.[c]

But the purſuit of any truth almoſt, except hiſtorical, is in other places held very cheap by him: and even this is very much degraded in general below the dignity of ſcience. Indeed for any man to beſtow a great deal of time upon that, which has no viſible end or uſe, may be trifling in effect, and a kind of comparative idleneſs. And where intuitive knowledge, univerſally acknowledged principles, or propoſitions mathematically demonſtrated are plainly repugnant, the purſuit can hardly not appear ridiculous. But ſtill

[c] P. 173.

no

no *real* truth is without *ſome* conſequences: and therefore haſtily to pronounce the ſearch after *any* to be abſolutely void of all poſſible uſe, becauſe the end is not immediately viſible to us, is certainly a very bold, if not preſumptuous aſſertion at leaſt; and a very contemptuous way of treating the judgment of thoſe, who are engaged therein. All philoſophical inquiries certainly have their poſſible ends and uſes; eſpecially all modern reſearches into the receſſes of nature have been ſhewn by experience to convey their reſpective benefits to mankind in general, though not viſible to every incurious eye; as they have their connexions with nature, or as they are induſtrious travels after her, in ſearch of her relations. Particular experimental uſes have ſometimes been ſtruck out, after the general ſpeculative principles have been long diſcovered, and effects have been thereby ſatisfactorily linked on to their proper cauſes. Witneſs the late application of geometrical propoſitions to natural experimental philoſophy. For where laws of action can be deduced by geometrical principles, the cauſe ſhewn equal to the effect, the effect exactly correſpondent to the cauſe, neither greater, nor leſs, but accurately proportioned, and experiment joins in concert to confirm the deduction, ſuch

knowledge muſt be very ſatisfactory, and pleaſing to the human mind, as well as very beneficial to individuals, and to human ſociety. It is wrong to imagine, that all valuable knowledge, or uſeful ſtudy ſhould be confined merely to political narrations of hiſtory.

All laborious collections of words in different languages and tranſlations of them into the mother language of each country, how much ſoever the taſk may be ridiculed by our author,[d] are ſo many obligations heaped upon mankind by the compilers. The labour may appear dull to men of quick and lively genius; but the more tedious, and leſs entertaining the labour, the greater is the obligation conferred upon mankind thereby. For how would our author's own pupils be ſo well or eaſily qualified for the ſtudy of univerſal hiſtory, in all the learned languages, without ſuch operoſe aſſiſtances prepared ready to their hands; if every man were firſt to compile his own gloſſary in each language, before he began? A work of life muſt precede the entrance of each pupil upon the ſtudy of hiſtory.

Again, the ſpeculative geometrician may be ridiculed by men whoſe only talent is a

[d] P. 5.

little

little rhetorical wit, perhaps only a little, low, ſmart buffoonry. Whereas great openings have been made into the wonders of nature, and the marvellous works of providence by the ſlow reſearches of the geometrical philoſopher, and many uſeful diſcoveries deduced by mathematical laws.

There is in ſhort, as *Tully* ſays of virtues, a kind of concatenation of truths among each other, ſo that one naturally infers another; where we did not perhaps at firſt perceive the connexion, or the ſeveral links of argument in the connecting chain. Wherever we find any man therefore treating almoſt every rational, generous kind of purſuit after truth, but his own, with contempt, we may in general with good reaſon ſuſpect him of great pride, and ſelf-conceit, of an high opinion about his own abilities, and knowledge, and ſkill in the application of his abilities. Whereas all men's minds were not originally formed or intended for the ſame ſtudies, any more than all men's bodies were faſhioned for the ſame labours. Society, and the very ends of ſocial life require a difference in both. So that we may apply to different talents of the ſoul, what St. *Paul* writeth, under the ſame metaphor, of different members of the body; *if the whole were an eye, where were the hear-*

ing? If the whole were hearing, where were the ſmelling? But now hath God diſpenſed the different talents of the ſoul, *as it hath pleaſed him*,[e] and every talent hath its proper uſes in the body ſocial.

Of the importance of truth *hiſtorical* let our author ſpeak his ſentiments in his own words: only let us firſt obſerve, that hiſtorical evidence is at beſt but *probable:* nay he will not ſometimes allow to *ancient* hiſtory any degree even of probability itſelf: but this is to run into extremes, as I have obſerved, inconſiſtent with his own plan of ſtudy. Evidence indeed may be leſs cogent, the higher we advance up into ancient days: light, the further you recede from the luminous body, it is certain, grows leſs glaring, leſs diſtinct and forcible in its impreſſions: but ſtill this proves not, that there is no reality of exiſtence in that body, or that the rays proceeding from it are not real rays, but phantoms. Let us however attend to this author's encomiums upon hiſtorical inſtruction. "Hiſ-"tory," ſaith he, "is philoſophy ſpeaking "by example:[f] the ſchool of example is the "world: the maſters of this ſchool hiſtory, "and experience.[g] By hiſtory," ſaith he, "a

[e] 1 Cor. xii. 17, 18. [f] P. 40, 41. [g] P. 15.

"man

"man may acquire in a few years, the ex-
"perience of more centuries, than any of the
"patriarchs ſaw."[h] But let us juſt obſerve here, that ſoon after we are confined by him in our hiſtorical credit, within the ſhort line of two hundred years upwards immediately preceding our own days. Yet ſaith he, "by
"hiſtory we are caſt back, as it were, into
"former ages; we live with the men, who
"lived before us; and we inhabit countries
"that we never ſaw.[i] It ſhews us cauſes as
"in fact they were laid, with their immediate
"effects; and it enables us to gueſs at future
"events."[j] Again, hiſtory is converſant about
"the paſt; and by knowing the things that
"*have* been, we become better able to judge
"of the things that are."[k] Such are the praiſes of hiſtory allowed by our author, and ſuch is his conſiſtency in reaſoning!

Now if ſuch be the juſt commendations of hiſtorical knowledge in general, as much ſurely may be ſaid with equal juſtice at leaſt of *ſacred* hiſtory, which contains the annals of divine revelation, and divine œconomy with moral agents, according to their reſpective exigencies and occaſions. Conſequently it muſt contain inſtruction as impor-

[h] P. 20. [i] P. 40. [j] P. 49. [k] P. 67.

tant

tant at leaſt, as any that is conveyed by the records of experience in *profane* hiſtory, and therefore ought to obtain equal attention at leaſt to its proofs, being derived from the God of knowledge, paſt, as well as preſent, who ſeeth throughout the whole line of experience at once.

Since therefore ſuch is the importance of truth, ſuch the uſes of hiſtorical ſcience, let us now proceed,

Fourthly, to examine the injury they do to ſociety, who endeavour to invalidate the evidence, and authority of truth; and to make a further remark or two upon the inconſiſtencies of our author, who has laboured to undermine or deſtroy the force of all probable argument.

The principles of moral and religious truth, with their neceſſary deductions, are the only ſecure ſource and cement of ſocial union. Hiſtory is a confirmation of theſe principles, and the juſtice of theſe deductions, by experience. The more then you contract the ſtream of hiſtorical knowledge, in its current from the fountain head of time, the more you reduce thoſe confirmations deducible from experience, which give ſtrength and vigour

to

moral principles. If all ancient *profane* hiſtory is to be traduced as [l] romance, where will be the great uſe of reading, what our author preſcribes alone to be read? where will be the benefit of conſidering, as to experimental knowledge, what never exiſted in fact? If all *ſacred* hiſtory is to be ſet aſide as [m] impoſture, and yet revealed religion, as he aſſerts, is only to be proved by hiſtorical evidence,[n] where ſhall we chriſtians go for proofs of our religion? Is not this deſiring us to give up all proofs of our religion at once, and then to ſay, that there is no religion? In ſhort, according to theſe tenets, what hiſtory remains for the accompliſhment of the fine gentleman? ſince hiſtory, it appears, is to be his principal, if not his ſole accompliſhment. For the narrations of *modern* times may, by his own account, be liable to *equal* exception at leaſt, nay perhaps have actually had equal exceptions made to them, even the very beſt of them, by equally ſceptical modern writers. Becauſe if we have leſs acquaintance with *ancient* facts, it may be ſaid, we are apt to have more partiality about *modern* ones. Writers contemporary with the facts they relate, or nearly contem-

[l] See P. 82, 105, 115, 118, 122, 131.
[m] See P. 83, 85, 87. [n] P. 175, 185.

porary

porary it may be ſaid, will always be liable to exceptions of party-prejudice, as thoſe who write of diſtant times, are liable to exceptions of imperfect information in facts. "Contemporary writers," ſaith our author, "are the moſt liable to be warped from the "ſtrait rule of truth."[o] A terrible ſhock this, given by himſelf to the credit of modern hiſtory!

Almoſt every ſpecies of learning then is, in ſome place or other of his writings, repreſented by him as uſeleſs and ridiculous, but hiſtorical; and yet this is placed upon a very precarious foundation. It is hiſtory alone, that we are to depend upon for a proper rule of life; and yet in the next pages of his book we are advertiſed, that we have no reaſonable dependence upon *this* rule. What is this, but to inform me, that I have no ground in ſcience to ſet my foot upon, but this ſingle ſpot, which he points out before me? and yet this ſpot is ſo ſlippery, ſo fallacious, ſo hollow, and ſuch treacherous ground, that I cannot with any ſafety reſt my foot there. An uncomfortable proſpect ſurely this, at ſetting out in ſcience; to be under obligations of ſtepping forwards, and

[o] P. 135.

yet

yet to have no ground to walk upon without peril!

Our author ſeems apprehenſive of this objection to his letters, that [p] univerſal pyrrhoniſm might be eſtabliſhed upon his principles, and therefore puts on the maſk of guarding againſt it. But whilſt he aims to exert his talent of wit upon the ſceptic, [q] he either does not, or pretends not to ſee, that his own principles run deep into *univerſal* ſcepticiſm.

He aſſerts it to have been long matter of aſtoniſhment to him, "why chriſtian divines "have taken ſo much filly pains to eſtabliſh "myſtery on metaphyſics, revelation on phi-"loſophy, and matter of fact on abſtract "reaſoning." [r] Objections ſimilar to this have incautiouſly been made by others againſt ſome of our ableſt and moſt pious divines, and therefore may deſerve an anſwer. The reaſon of ſuch pains is but too clear and manifeſt. For will not the unbeliever expect to be anſwered in the ſcience within the ſphere of which his objection is ſtated, or from whence his principle is taken? In order to convince the objector, will it not be neceſſary to prove either that the principle

[p] P. 137. [q] P. 134, 169. [r] P. 175.

aſſumed

aſſumed by him is not true, or the conſequence not rightly deduced? So far the argumentation will naturally fall within ſome learned ſcience, perhaps of metaphyſics, or ſome other branch of philoſophy and abſtract reaſoning. Thus far the proofs or illuſtrations of different points of divinity may lie within different branches of ſcience. And thus far the pains beſtowed upon theſe ſciences, and the topics of argument deduced from thence will neither be *ſilly* nor uſeleſs. For is the theologiſt to prove, or illuſtrate by any *one* ſcience only, that which naturally falls under the province of *another*? The unbeliever by ſuch means might gain advantages over his chriſtian antagoniſt, which our author probably could have wiſhed him. For is a metaphyſical doubt to be ſettled by hiſtory? Is a logical queſtion to be anſwered by hiſtorical ſolution? Is a phyſical ſcruple to be ſatisfied by hiſtorical narration? Our author ſurely muſt have ſeen the weakneſs and fallacy of ſuch reaſonings. They are in ſhort the diſputers of this world, who make metaphyſics, philoſophy, and abſtract reaſoning much oftener neceſſary in divinity, than they otherwiſe would be. Beſides, where is the harm of confirming, illuſtrating, or inculcating important truths by

by principles of *any* ſcience, which may be judged beſt adapted to the purpoſe? An age, that profeſſes ſcience, ſeems to be ſatisfied only with arguments deduced from learned ſcience. Revelation reſting only upon hiſtorical ground, or its own internal aſſertions, will not ſatisfy all; with many will not have its full weight and influence. The morals of the goſpel are, in this age, required to be proved not inconſiſtent with moral principles founded in the laws of nature: the doctrines of the goſpel, though in ſome points ſuperior to the adequate reach of human philoſophy, yet not abſolutely contradictory to principles of human abſtract reaſon. And further, in the illuſtration or inculcation of moral truths, various topics of argument, various motives for inforcement, various figures in deſcription, may be very appoſitely borrowed, and accommodated to the purpoſe from various arts and ſciences.

This ſuggeſts a ſerious inference or two from what has been offered in theſe two diſcourſes, applicable to thoſe, who are ſituated for education in this place; of which they will find the importance, as ſoon as they enter upon their reſpective employments in life, particularly they who are deſigned for the ſacred office of the clergy.

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The different kinds of truth, that exiſt in the world, and have their relation to us, and are the ſubject of modern ſpeculation and converſation, the various ways in which truth may be conveyed, rendered conſpicuous, and inforced, require applications to different kinds of ſcience in thoſe, who are deſirous to be common friends of truth, and to diſcharge the duties of their reſpective callings with fidelity, eſpecially thoſe who are by their vocation appointed miniſters of the word of truth. In this age of profeſſed literature a greater degree of knowledge will be required of thoſe, who have received an education within theſe nurſeries of learning, than would have been needful in darker ages. Among the laity *this* perſon may excell in *one* branch of ſcience, *that* in another; it may perhaps hardly be more ſafe for him, who is called to be the miniſter of the word of truth, than for the orators of old amongſt the *Romans*, to be *entirely* ignorant almoſt in any. *The prieſts lips are to retain knowledge*;[s] he muſt have a mind opened and prepared to comprehend, and a mouth ready to explain truth. At this fountain the thirſty are to drink: happy is it for them, if when they aſk, he is

[s] Mal. II. 7.

both

both willing and able to ſupply them with *living water!*

But let it be remembered, that every degree of finite knowledge is relative, all ſuperiority of knowledge is comparative; being greater, or leſs, in proportion to the intellects of thoſe, with whom it is compared: all inſtruction is to be adapted to the capacity of the learner, and ſuited to the nature of the truth delivered, or occaſionally defended. Hiſtories are to be confirmed; cuſtoms explained; parables unveiled; metaphors cleared; ſeeming inconſiſtencies reconciled; languages tranſlated; idioms aſcertained; precepts inforced; motives urged; affections excited. Application in the years of youth, and much ſubſequent induſtry will be requiſite for the right diſcharge of theſe ſeveral offices. The man of God muſt be, in the language of our Saviour, *like an houſholder well furniſhed, that bringeth forth out of his treaſures things new, and old.*[t] He muſt be maſter of diſcoveries in ſcience ancient, and modern, that he may occaſionally make a proper uſe of them to the general improvement of his hearers.

Wherefore, as the burthen upon him is great in reſpect to abſtract ſpeculation, that

[t] Matt. xiii. 52.

he may be the more fully at leiſure to attend the taſk, the leſs he is encumbered with worldly avocations, eſpecially the man who principally dedicates his time to any of theſe ſtudies; an inference may be urged upon thoſe who ſhall hereafter live in any degree of dignity, or office of magiſtracy among the laity; that they endeavour to make this burthen as eaſy as they can, by making the burthen of worldly cares ſit as light upon him as poſſible. The man dedicated to abſtract ſtudies ſhould not be overladen with neceſſary concerns of daily ſuſtenance, which will *preſs down the ſoul* in her efforts to *muſe upon many things*. Worldly cares will intrude themſelves, and nature will force them upon him, where a ſufficient proviſion is not made of temporal conveniences; much uſeful pious ſtudy has been prevented by neceſſary attention to worldly buſineſs. To make the journey through life as eaſy as poſſible, to ſupply his kindred, and neceſſary dependents, that travel with him towards a better, with all convenient accommodations in the way, eſpecially to vindicate thoſe rights, and maintain thoſe conveniences, wherewith the ſtate, in which he is converſant, ſupplies him, whatever may be our author's reproaches upon the clergy, will yet be the laudable

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deſire of every good and virtuous man. It is the call of prudence; it is the call of nature; it is an univerſal obligation of humanity and honour. Such a watchful care in every man over himſelf, and family, and his ſocial rights, has a natural tendency to the good of the community; whoſe welfare is compounded of that of individuals, excited by their reſpective honeſt ſolicitude for thoſe, that ſtand nearly related to them in nature.

Let not the laity therefore grudge any little emoluments granted by the piety of their forefathers towards the ſupport of a chriſtian miniſtry, or towards the education of men in ſuch ſeminaries of ſcience as this, who may be future defenders of truth; who may oblige the world with new and uſeful diſcoveries, and be ſucceſſive ornaments to their country. Neither give the clergy difficulty in the recovery of their juſt rights; but labour to prevent difficulty. Since all ſuch time as is beſtowed in diſputes upon thoſe ſubjects, will in effect be ſtolen from your own ſpiritual improvement. Oblige not the clergy to maintain ſuits, which ill-wiſhing, uncharitable men may afterwards injuriouſly interpret vexatious or oppreſſive, though neceſſarily commenced for the recovery or preſervation of their ſmall patri-

mony, if I may ſo ſtyle it, inherited in deſcent from the generoſity of ancient, pious benefactors; and where the voice of nature perhaps urged moſt powerfully for the ſecurity of all the little livelihood, that their reſpective ſtation in their profeſſion admitted. Much leſs ſuffer any to harras or perplex them with ſuits, merely becauſe it is known, that they are ill able to maintain a ſuit. This is not chriſtianity; this is not common humanity. But the friend of truth will be a friend of right and equity; a friend and patron, and promoter of benevolence towards every place, and perſon engaged in the inveſtigation or communication of uſeful, ſalutary ſcience.

It will be the future province of ſome educated in this place, and before whom I now ſpeak, to be employed in the inveſtigation and ſupport of ſuch truth, as is very important to *ſocial* beings, of civil, equitable, and legal truth; for the detection and puniſhment of fraud under all its ſecret covers; for the protection of communicative or diſtributive juſtice, and the maintenance of civil right. A ſtudy neceſſary to the welfare of mankind, ſo long as men ſhall be created neceſſarily ſocial beings, and many among them ſhall retain and cultivate very *unſocial* diſ-

diſpoſitions. To thoſe then, who are intended for this ſtudy I would beg leave to obſerve, that *this* alſo, as well as *religious* ſcience, is founded not upon mathematical, demonſtrative, but upon probable, moral evidence. Such perſons therefore will ſoon be ſenſible, what miſchief is done to ſocial eſtabliſhment by all endeavours to invalidate the evidence of moral truth. Univerſal ſcepticiſm, or a diſtruſt of all truth would be inconſiſtent with the principles of ſuch a profeſſion: for law ſuppoſes credit given to probable, hiſtorical evidence. Our author himſelf inſiſts on the ſtrong obligation lying upon perſons engaged in the honourable profeſſion of the law to apply themſelves to hiſtory, in a remarkable paſſage, where he takes an opportunity of detracting as virulently from the general character of the modern profeſſors of the law, as he had before incautiouſly, and very inconſiſtently done, from the credit and dignity of his own favourite ſcience, that of hiſtory, and the writers that have ſignalized themſelves therein, the greateſt number of hiſtorians, ancient, and modern. For in this paſſage he excepts very few, if he would willingly except any, of the modern profeſſors of the law, out of the ſevere cenſure of "groveling all their lives in a mean but gain-

" ful application to all the little arts of chi-
" cane."[u] From hence we learn his charitable opinion of other profeſſions, as well as of the clergy.

Thus far however we may accord with him, that civil inquiries muſt oftentimes begin with the knowledge of civil hiſtory, and therefore ſome certainty in the evidence of civil hiſtory, whether ancient, or modern muſt be preſuppoſed. The reaſon of ancient laws is founded in the circumſtances, and ſtate of things: and therefore we can never be ſatisfied, that we are fully acquainted with the reaſon and intent of theſe laws, unleſs we can rely upon the hiſtorical relation of the facts, that occaſioned theſe enactions.

I might now further enlarge, from what has been ſaid, upon the uſefulneſs of theſe ſeats of literature, where the materials of future knowledge are early taken in, and preparations made for future experience in life. I might urge the hazard of ſetting out early in doubtfulneſs about eſtabliſhed principles, or of cultivating ſuch morals as may be the ſprings of ſcepticiſm, or of imbibing early prejudices againſt mankind, or their received opinions, merely perhaps becauſe they *are*

[u] P. 185, 186.

received:

received: but this would carry me too far at preſent.

How ill, unſteady a friend moral ſcepticiſm is to the eſtabliſhed order of political ſocieties, we have but too ſtrong an inſtance in one, who was born with abilities capable of becoming very uſeful in the body politic: and it is no wonder, that the author alluded to ſhould merit ſo little confidence in political hiſtory, who hath induſtriouſly made it appear by his late legacy to the world, that he raiſed his ſuperſtructure, whether of conduct, or hiſtory, upon no ſolid foundation either of religious, moral, or ſocial principles. The ſceptic in every other branch of ſcience muſt, in order to be conſiſtent with himſelf, be equally ſo in the foundations of the political. It could not indeed be expected, that he ſhould have any principles of policy to fix him, except thoſe of prejudice, perſonal intereſt, particular temporary affection, or reſentment, who diſavowed almoſt all other acknowledged elements of ſcience, on which the ſure foundation of politics is laid: and how unſteadily perſonal motives are likely to influence, the conduct of that author hath ſufficiently proved.

One general caution then to men of *all* profeſſions naturally occurs, very conſonant

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to chriſtian religion; naturally preſervative of ſocial peace; proper to be inculcated in theſe days: not to be fond of diſpute; nor, for the ſake of ſhewing ſingular abilities, or a ſingular refinement in philoſophy, ſtudious to contradict, what mankind hath univerſally acknowledged: for the conſequences of ſuch a temper may lead men further, than they at firſt intended, till they come at length to that inveterate bigotry againſt truth, that their determination, agreeable to the expreſſion of an ancient *Roman*, ſhall be, *etiamſi perſuaſeris, tamen non perſuadebis.*

Let the youthful mind eſpecially be cautious, how it ſets ſail in this dangerous ocean of doubtfulneſs, without any ballaſt, without any rudder, without any certain point of land in view. We ſee how many have been ſhipwrecked in old age, who thus have ſet out in youth. We ſee many that have wandered all their life long upon the ſea of error; ſometimes indeed enjoying for a few hours an apparent ſun-ſhine; but oftener obſcured in clouds, or thick darkneſs, and ever afraid to land.

Finally, my brethren, engaged in the miniſtry of the word of truth, or in preparation for that miniſtry, let us carry one remark ever with us, for our encouragement; that

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as all our knowledge is in a progreſſive ſtate, and will probably continue ſo for ever, ſo according to our improvements, and the application we have made of our knowledge here, in the ſervice of our great maſter, amidſt his creatures, we ſhall preſerve a proportionable ſtation of eminence hereafter in our future life; always approaching nearer to our creator, though ſtill even in an infinite progreſs, at an infinite diſtance from him. Yet thus improving, and thus refined, ſhall ye be as lights diſtinguiſhed in the heavens, above many of leſſer glory, whom your knowledge may have inſtructed; and whom either by authority, perſuaſion, example, or due diſtribution of civil ſanctions, you may in the end have led to happineſs; *when they that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and they that have turned many to righteouſneſs, as the ſtars for ever and ever.*[w]

[w] Dan. xii. 3.

DISCOURSE IV.

The True Intention, public Uſe and Importance of Academic Education, conſidered.—Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, on *Act-Sunday*, *July* 13, 1755. Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houſes.

PHILIPP. IV. 8.

Finally, Brethren, whatſoever Things are true, whatſoever Things are honeſt, whatſoever Things are juſt, whatſoever Things are pure, whatſoever Things are lovely, whatſoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praiſe, think on theſe Things.

IT is a great advantage to creatures ſituated under conditions of behaviour for the attainment of happineſs, to have the genera

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out-lines of duty ſet before them in a conſpicuous light. We have in the text, a ſhort and clear ſummary of qualifications requiſite to complete the chriſtian character. A character, which once rendered chriſtianity amiable to mankind in the face of its adverſaries: and if any true love of virtue prevailed as intimately, as it ought, upon many who pretend to be animated thereby, the tendency of the goſpel ſtill to promote the ſame character would again recommend it to ſome of our modern deiſts, and unbelievers. The character is very extenſive; including not only the rules of rigid virtue, and of rough unpoliſhed honeſty, but all the delicacy of lovely, engaging conduct, and chaſte elegance of manners. We are commanded to purſue not only *whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, if there be any virtue* acknowledged in them: but alſo to adorn our chriſtian demeanour, and recommend it to the general eſteem of mankind, by ſtudying likewiſe *whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report, if there be any praiſe* juſtly to be aſcribed to them.[a]

[a] Philipp. iv. 8.

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We are commanded to imitate ſuch conduct, as the firſt converts both learned, and received, and heard, and ſaw in a great maſter of addreſs, in a well-educated, diſcreet apoſtle. For thus he enjoins, in the words immediately enſuing the text; *thoſe things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and ſeen in me, do; and the God of peace ſhall be with you.*[b] Theſe things will infallibly procure for you ſolid peace and aſſurance of mind, with reſpect to the favour of God; who will alſo in ſuch manner direct the world, that they ſhall in general obtain ſocial peace, good-will, and eſteem among all mankind.

Such a character, more generally cultivated in the chriſtian world, would be of great ſervice to the chriſtian cauſe. The ſceptic, whoſe pride would not ſuffer him to be convinced by chriſtian arguments, would be ſilenced by the polite lenity of chriſtian conduct. The fine gentleman could not any longer pretend to be aſhamed of being a chriſtian: becauſe the beſt chriſtian would be the gentleman of the moſt accompliſhed, and engaging manners. True chriſtian decorum, and a ſincere deſire to win all men, would

[b] Philipp. iv. 9.

wonder-

wonderfully recommend chriſtianity to the love of all men.

But this conciliatory character, this chaſte deference to the eſteem and affections of men, which thus merits the regard of chriſtians in general, even for the ſake of chriſtianity, will particularly claim the attention of the chriſtian ſcholar; ought ſtill more eſpecially to be the reigning ornament of academic education. Such characters abounding in literary ſocieties will be their principal ſupport in civilized ſtates: the promotion of them demands, on this account, to be made a principal point of view in academic inſtitutions: and the obligation will have its influence upon thoſe, who deſire to recommend the places where themſelves were educated.

It may be ſaid perhaps, that the culture of truth is the principal intention of theſe retired ſeminaries. But it muſt be further urged, that theſe ſchools are ſet apart for the education of thoſe, who are to ſtudy likewiſe the recommendation of truth. It is a leſſon taught us even by a learned heathen, to employ ourſelves not only in inquiry after truth, but alſo after whatever is decent, and becoming. The leſſon will take up much time in learning, and applying it well: and therefore it is, that by his own example he requires us to be,

be, as it were, wholly employed in the taſk. For every ſtation and rank in life, every ſociety of men, as well as each individual, hath its proper character; its proper decency and conſiſtency belonging to that character. And it is the injunction of the apoſtle that we ſhould meditate not only upon what is *true*; but alſo upon what is *lovely* in our ſtation, and *of good report*. Indeed whatever is lovely and of good report is a branch of truth to be ſtudied, becauſe it is a branch of conſiſtency with moral character.

There is indeed ſuch a thing, as rigid virtue, and rude enthuſiaſtic religion perſonal to a man's ſelf, without any regard to mankind. I will not deny this to be virtue and religion. And perhaps it may ſometimes have its uſes, without deſigning them. But *this* one may venture to affirm, that virtue and religion regardleſs of ſociety, and of the means whereby they may recommend themſelves to ſociety, will loſe above half their praiſe, becauſe they will loſe above half their beneficial uſe and effect. For man was not born merely to make himſelf happy. We are introduced as into a great theatre, and obliged to pleaſe, that we may improve many, who ſtand around us, in our action; in order that we may pleaſe,

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and receive approbation from the great maſter of rewards.

Thus hath the apoſtle opened a large field of meditation before us. I flatter myſelf, I ſhall have your candid attention, whilſt I enlarge a little, before this audience, upon ſuch qualities, as will ever be an ornament of learned ſocieties, are uſually preſcribed as a ſubject of joint prayer before this congregation, and will ever vindicate academic inſtitutions. For religion, learning, virtue, and good manners will render every ſociety, that duly cultivates them, greatly beneficial in example, as well as inſtruction, to the commonwealth. Some few remarks then upon the virtues recommended in the text: as proper objects of academic diſcipline, will ſhew the uſe and importance of ſuch eſtabliſhments to the public, and furniſh us with ſome few inferences deducible from the apoſtle's precept.

Truth then will be the firſt object of purſuit to the ſincerely moral, or religious agent. For upon this alone all moral action, or religious devotion can be rightly founded. Eſpecially ſhould it be the firſt object of impartial ſtudy in theſe ſeats, ſacred to ſedate inquiry after truth, and its confirmation. Some kind of receſs therefore from the world is the very intention

intention of theſe ſocieties. Yet they are not on this account, to be entirely regardleſs of the world, its intereſts, or good eſteem: ſince they are deſigned for nurſeries of education to perſons, who are ſoon to be uſhered into the world, to act a part and maintain a character in it. There may be various kinds of truth propoſed for the exerciſe of young minds within theſe ſeats: all tending to the glory of God; many in their eſſential conſequences to the immediate benefit of mankind. The apoſtle's injunction is univerſal: *Whatſoever things are true*, are a deſerving object of meditation to the chriſtian in general: much more to the chriſtian *ſcholar*: he means not indeed all ſuch as are trivial, but ſuch as are uſeful, and in any degree important. For truths of various ſorts become proper objects of learning, under different degrees of importance, as they affect mankind under various capacities, and relations, whether as individuals, or as ſocial beings, whether as inhabitants of this world, or candidates for a better: truths introductive to ſeveral ſciences, and profeſſions: truths common to all ſciences; and eſſential to all. Theſe are ſtiled firſt principles, as being firſt foundations of ſcience, on which the ſuperſtructure in knowledge is to be raiſed. Theſe firſt principles

are a kind of intuitive knowledge, or neceſſary truths reſulting from the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind, univerſally confirmed by the unanimous aſſent, and common experience of mankind in all ages.

How diſcouraging then, I might have ſaid, how inconſiſtent with the cauſe of ſcience, is the requeſt of a late noble ſceptic, who would perſuade us to ſet aſide all firſt principles: that is, to ſet aſide the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind, and, at this age of the world, to enter upon our journey in ſcience only by induction from experiments! It is, to ſet aſide the experience of all former ages, in order to begin to argue from experience: to ſet aſide all ancient obſervation, and maxims founded upon univerſal obſervation: to ſet aſide univerſal aſſent, founded principally upon experimental knowledge, whatever he may think of it, in order to begin to argue from the partial obſervations of one perſon, age, or country: a great compliment certainly to the ſagacity of that perſon, age, or country! In ſhort to reject the truths proved by the reſearches of all our anceſtors in ſcience; and, if I may uſe the expreſſion, to begin the world again in knowledge: to replace mankind back in the very infancy of ſcience: though ſucceſſive improvements in

many

many practical arts, built upon ancient eſtabliſhed principles, have proved, that there was ſome truth in thoſe principles; and that we have frequently been obliged to our anceſtors for the maxims they have left us, yea even for abſtract principles, and rules of reaſoning.

The apoſtle's expreſſion ſeems to ſuppoſe many truths eſtabliſhed; as the next words ſeem to imply, that we know in general, what is *juſt*, and *pure*; and he directs the meditations of the thoughtful chriſtian to all ſuch intereſting principles as are thus eſtabliſhed. He does not confine our reſearches, as ſome would limit them, merely to the letter of holy ſcripture: for many ſciences may be neceſſary to the full underſtanding of holy ſcripture: as figures and alluſions are taken from many: and ſome of the moſt inſtructive fathers, and moſt rational commentators upon ſcripture have been thoſe, who had been moſt converſant in various other ſciences.

The truths of revelation indeed will be neceſſary ſubjects of ſerious examination to beings, whoſe views naturally reach out towards ſomething further than natural powers can enable them to aſcertain objects with ſufficient clearneſs: into regions, where, whatever the

infidel may think, natural reaſon ſtrongly points out intereſts to them. Application then to the ſacred volumes will be moſt ſalutary and advantageous, and can by none with ſafety be totally omitted, as comprehending the whole will of the Deity concerning us; who firſt called us into exiſtence, and gives us all our faculties of thinking. But ſtill the attendance on this ſtudy will be variouſly proportioned to other reſpective engagements in life. All virtuous exerciſes of the underſtanding, as they ſerve to ſtrengthen the intellect, have their ſpecial uſes in academic ſocieties; where objects of ſcience are ſet forth in common. The application of principles is to be made afterwards, when the ſtudent launches forth into the world, according to the occaſions, or exigencies of ſociety, and his own particular profeſſion therein. The apoſtle opens to our range the whole field of truth. All the wonders of nature, and the whole diſplay of divine power, wiſdom, and goodneſs in the ſpiritual or material world become proper objects of contemplation to the rational ſoul: and the more it expatiates in this field, the more will it find reaſon to admire and adore the great Creator.

The foundations of truth being laid, he directs our meditations in the next place to ſuch

ſuch things as are calculated to gain reſpect, or due veneration; ὅσα σεμνὰ: whatſoever things are reſpectable, or calculated to gain the regard due to any ſtation, wherein providence hath placed us, for the good of the moral ſyſtem: whether to the private chriſtian, as inveſted with the chriſtian character: or to the chriſtian dignified with any public office for the common benefit of ſociety wherein he reſides. Each is exhorted to walk worthy of his vocation. For a certain kind of dignity or reſpect, greater or leſs, attends every rank, and vocation in life: and whoever is duly attentive to the means of obtaining it, to its cauſes and conſequences, will ſoon find its importance: whoever is duly obſervant at the ſame time of the tempers of men with whom he converſes, will find, that dignity is to be maintained, not by rigid gravity, or ſullen moroſeneſs on the one hand, nor yet by trivial levity, and flattering obſequiouſneſs on the other. For as the one will perſonally diſguſt; and thus obſtruct that affection of eſteem, which is a main ſupport of true dignity: ſo the other is a natural oppoſition to all dignity in itſelf. A character truly reſpectable, like what is ſaid of virtue, will in general conſiſt in a happy medium of deportment between auſterity and

levity. Without obſervance of this golden medium, the higheſt ſtation may miſs of reſpect: whilſt the loweſt, even poverty and indigence, with proper conduct, may ſecure it. For the diſcreetly good man will be reſpectable, and reſpected in every ſituation.

Too many perſons now-a-days act, as if they did not deſire reſpect, and then complain, that they have it not. For of the two extremes abovementioned, that of thoughtleſs levity and giddineſs ſeems to have too greatly the aſcendancy in the preſent age. To this inadvertency it is owing, that many ſtart up into men, before they are well apprized, that they are advanced above the years of childhood: and many ſlide down into old age, before they have well begun, or are well prepared to act the part of men. Through this levity, and its attendant vices, they loſe the reſpect of manhood, of old age, of ſuperior rank or fortune. For nothing can more effectually tend to bring all orders and ſtations to a level, than promiſcuous diſſoluteneſs, and general licentiouſneſs of manners.

The proper ſedateneſs inſtilled by academic education, and a few years regular ſubmiſſion to academic diſcipline, will have a ſtrong influence to prevent, or to correct this levity in minds where vicious example may have introduced

troduced it. They will here be taught by the dictates of ancient authors, and ſages of renown, that whatever behaviour ſecures true reſpect muſt be conſiſtent with character, conſiſtent with honeſty, conſiſtent with honour, and the relative honour particularly required in that ſtation. Wherefore the word among the *Latins* is often rendered *honeſtum*; which implies all theſe qualities. Whereas the *Engliſh* word *honeſt*, as it is tranſlated in the text, does not ſo fully anſwer the idea of the *Greek* word σεμνὰ. We may remark however, that this injunction of the apoſtle ſhould be a recommendation of chriſtian religion to our men of profeſſed honour. For if this be their grand fundamental of duty, they have here a full direction to act according to it. But then at the ſame time it ought not to exclude out of moral character other principles or virtues: being founded in, or eſſentially coincident with them. For true honour will always have regard to juſtice, with which it is here joined by the apoſtle, as a companion; ὅσα σεμνὰ, ὅσα δίκαια.

The elements of juſtice, flowing from the natural relations of mankind, ſeemingly connected with the very nature of moral agents, of all eſpecially whoſe ſphere of activity reaches beyond themſelves, and who may

either affect, or be affected by the actions of other beings, will neceſſarily demand the attention of all, whoſe happineſs is ſo deeply founded in ſocial welfare. The principles of natural law are thoſe eſtabliſhed rules of right and equity, which one rational agent may expect from another. On the obſervance of theſe the happineſs of ſocial beings is made dependent in the order of nature. They are what the plan of nature, directive to ſocial welfare, according to the divine eſtabliſhment, preſcribes. The principles are general; to be imbibed early; that particular caſes may afterwards be ſolved thereby: conſequences muſt be deduced, and rules learnt whereby the deductions may be ſecurely made.

Young perſons are apt to complain of the dryneſs of the early ſtudies preſcribed to them in this place: that the grammar of ſciences, if I may ſo ſtile it, is dull. And it is no wonder, if to many it ſhould ſo appear. The caſe is, they want to haſten into active life, before they are fit for it. Speculation is too abſtracted, and requires too much ſedateneſs for their volatile ſpirits, eager to be engaged in action. Many parents are too apt to encourage this forwardneſs: and thereby ruin many children. For the elements of practical wiſdom are neceſſary to be learnt. But when

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is this grammer ſo eaſily to be learnt as in youth? It will be the ſecurity of theſe initiates in life, at leaſt a ſecurity of the ſtate, wherein they are to converſe, that they ſhould be acquainted with the principles of moral action, before they enter upon action. For the conduct of every individual will in ſome degree affect the community. General abſtract rules, whereof experience alone can ſhew the full uſe, may perhaps appear dull to young minds, for this reaſon, among others, becauſe uſually comprized in general, abſtract terms. The meaning of theſe terms is obſcure, or not familiar to them, becauſe remote from common life, and converſation. Their inexperience veils over the uſes, which their forefathers have felt; who compiled theſe epitomes of ſcience. But let them wait a little: let them learn the language of equity: let them pay a deference to the experience of the aged, and attend to the leſſons of active, prudent men, who have gone before them! Life will then ſoon teach them to apply the rules to advantage. *Days will ſpeak: and Multitude of years will teach wiſdom.*[c] The benefit of what youthful memory had treaſured up will ſoon be felt. The application

[c] Job xxxii. 7.

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of rules will afford delight: and the delight of doing good, under daily exigencies of ſocial life, will urge them forwards to daily improvements in the knowledge of ſocial equity. No man ever yet repented his early attendance upon the ſtudy of natural juſtice, who endeavoured to conform his own life, and that of his fellow-beings to the dictates of juſtice.

The welfare of ſociety, and the ſecurity of individuals requires, that the principles of juſtice, and the rules of deduction from thence ſhould be well underſtood in ſtates. And in proportion as theſe ſhall be more or leſs preciſely defined and aſcertained, communities will be rightly eſteemed more or leſs civilized. The honour of a nation therefore, as well as the happineſs of its private members, demands attendance upon theſe ſtudies. And the greater the attendance and encouragement ſhall be, which is given to theſe ſtudies in our two ancient ſeats of literature, the leſs reaſon will remain to be pleaded for any precipitancy in ſending young perſons abroad, during the moſt perilous age of life, under a proſpect of purſuing this part of knowledge more ſucceſsfully.

The principles of this branch of ethical ſcience may become a proper object of conſideration

ſideration to young perſons ſituated here, under different views and intentions. Some will hereafter be called forth to inveſtigate caſes of civil difficulty: ſome to explain the obligations of juſtice in ſocial life, and to inforce the practice thereof upon their fellow-beings by motives of nature, moral duty, and religion: ſome to execute the ſanctions of civil juſtice: ſome to determine caſes of diſtributive juſtice: ſome to be concerned in enacting, or maintaining laws of commutative juſtice. Particular ſtudies may be directed, according to the province, which the ſtudent deſigns to undertake. But there are fundamental principles common, and eſſential to *all*. It is proper that *all* ſhould know the grounds upon which laws are founded. They are rules and precepts of ſocial conduct, grounded upon nature, inforced upon the members of civil bodies, for public good, by proper ſanctions and authority. The elements of civil law may be conſidered as grammars of equity deduced from nature. Let young perſons reflect a little within themſelves upon the benefit which they feel from their remembrance of the rules of grammar in language. Irkſome, and uſeleſs as theſe rules might have appeared to them, when firſt learnt, in childhood, yet when they now

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come to converſe familiarly with ancient authors, to embrace the counſels of them that have lived many ages before them, in diſtant regions, to form accurate judgments upon their works and ſtyle, the rules are found beneficial, and the recollection pleaſant. Now what grammar is in languages, the elements of ſeveral ſciences, of logic, metaphyſics, ethics, natural juſtice, and ſuch like, are in philoſophy and ſpeculation; preparatives for active life; the firſt ſtamina of future regular knowledge. Theſe ſtamina ſhould be early combined and fitly joined together, that by gradual increaſe of ſcience, a well compacted able conſtitution may in due time of maturity be formed. Never can ſure foundations be more opportunely laid, than within theſe ſeminaries of learning, in the ſeaſon of youth, that life afterwards may admit time to raiſe an uſeful and convenient ſuperſtructure.

But, that a purity of intellect may be preſerved for ſtudy, let a purity of morals be carefully cultivated within theſe ſeats; and let us ſtrictly follow the apoſtle's next direction, in fixing our affections upon *whatſoever things are pure*. For it is well known to experience, that ſenſuality, and looſe indulgences will grievouſly impair the intellect, and

and deprave the judgment. They will ſet the man at variance with truth, with juſtice, with principles of ſolid ſcience, with his fellow-beings, and with himſelf. They will render it oftentimes his apparent intereſt not to find things as they really are, and conſequently make it his endeavour to find them otherwiſe than they really are. His ſtudy will be to deceive himſelf: and then it is no wonder, if he falls into error in the moſt important concerns: no wonder, that when vice, ignorance, and ill-judgment have taken poſſeſſion of the fort, truth and ſalutary knowledge ſhould not be permitted to enter. Let young perſons therefore guard well the ſprings, from whence *are the iſſues of life*;[4] cautious of admitting habits of vice into their minds, let them open all its avenues to uſeful ſcience; jealous of any corrupt maxims that may be inſtilled by libertines. The retirement of theſe ſeats from the gay and giddy world, the wholeſome diſcipline inſtituted therein to oppoſe the inſinuations of the corrupted part, are favourable tuitions to the pure mind: circumſtances favourable to the cauſe of early virtue.

Whoever duly conforms himſelf to that diſcipline, ſtudious to recommend himſelf as

[4] Prov. iv. 23.

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an uſeful member of ſociety, will at the ſame time induſtriouſly comply with the two laſt parts of the apoſtle's precept, as virtues of accompliſhment in the chriſtian character; he will frequently meditate, or, as the original word may imply, will meditate ſo, as to eſtimate their true value, upon *whatſoever things are lovely, and of good report.* For I ſhall comprize theſe two remaining characters in one. Becauſe, though whatever is lovely may, through envy and depravity of the world, not at all times obtain a good report: yet whatever is truly amiable in itſelf will at all times deſerve it: will for the moſt part obtain it too, from all, whoſe eſteem is truly valuable: and as for the reſt, it is rather riotous fickle noiſe of popular voice, than truly *good report.*

A kind of natural ſatisfaction in the good eſteem of mankind, from the accompliſhment of ſuch undertakings as are the common objects of praiſe, is wiſely implanted by providence for wiſe and uſeful purpoſes; as an incitement to actions which are in themſelves excellent and amiable. And it is here acknowledged, nay urged by the apoſtle, as a worthy motive of action. We are exhorted by him to have our view directed to *whatſoever things are of good report.* For there is a beauty

a beauty and gracefulneſs in the decorum of moral character, naturally pleaſing to all minds, as there is a beauty in the proportion of natural bodies agreeable to all eyes. This pleaſing ſenſe of beauty, I ſay, is no doubt implanted by the creator for wiſe and good ends; to recommend the excellence of moral character, or the fitneſs of well-adjuſted proportion in bodies, to the admiration, and eſteem of men: that they may be eagerly impelled, as it were, by this inſtinctive ſenſe, to cultivate, and improve, and make a right application of what is thus agreeable to the ſight, and human ſoul. For the natural affections are the inſtinct that excite mankind to action. They are the moving gale: reaſon is the pilot deſigned to guide the veſſel.

This ſenſe of beauty in decorum, or what I may call moral proportion, appears to be natural, becauſe univerſal; not confined to particular nations, or ages, or climates; but in ſome degree diffuſed through the whole human ſpecies: in ſome places, or inſtances perhaps, like other ſenſations, depraved by falſe habit, or natural cuſtom, but no where totally extinguiſhed.

Whoever then ſhall endeavour to degrade this natural ſentiment into an imputation of weakneſs,

weakneſs, as a [e] late noble writer hath attempted to do, repreſenting it as founded in human pride, and only a vanity in human nature, will in the event be diſcovered to have pride and vanity enough in himſelf to contradict the univerſal ſenſe, I had almoſt ſaid the natural inſtinct, of all mankind. He will ſtrongly evince the truth of an old remark, that the enemies to chriſtian revelation are at the ſame time enemies to moral virtue: he will be an enemy to the moſt refined branch of moral virtue, and for this reaſon probably ſo inveterate an adverſary to chriſtian religion above all others, becauſe this religion is the beſt friend to modeſty, to decorum, and to virtue in general. But no wonder, that a man ſhould thus endeavour to root up the very foundations of decorum, who could write in favour of inceſt, and take his model of conjugal fidelity from *Turkey:* who could aſcribe to the worſt, and loweſt of motives one ſpecies of modeſty univerſally natural, to a deſire only of obtaining "[f] a "more uncontrolled, and undiſturbed grati-"fication of ſenſual appetite."

What he advances concerning modeſty is not only ſhocking to the ears of grave, philo-

[e] Bolingb. Philoſoph. Works, Vol. IV. p. 126-7. Oct. Edit.
[f] Ib. 127.

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ſophic ſcholars, whom he aſſerts to have taken [g] "a great deal of dull pains" in defending it, though *Cicero* be in the number of its advocates, but muſt neceſſarily be ſo likewiſe to every man of polite thought; to every man that has any ſenſe of delicacy, I had almoſt ſaid, of common humanity. For baniſh modeſty; and you with it baniſh one of the moſt refined virtues which can diſtinguiſh, and give luſtre to human nature. Baniſh decorum; and you with it baniſh a moſt civilized, cementing virtue: a virtue, which reſtrains from ſavage brutality, and is one of the beſt ornaments, and guardians of almoſt every other virtue: a virtue, of which the civilized part of mankind have ever retained a moſt delicate ſenſibility, and the more they were civilized, the quicker was their ſenſe of the accompliſhment, and the more delighted were they with the ſenſation. But ſtill a ſenſe thereof has in ſome degree been natural to *all*, even to the moſt unrefined. And upon the rudiments of nature it was, that art ſucceſsfully proceeded in civilizing men. For if, as our [h] author himſelf preſumes his own papers to have ſhewn, there be ſuch a thing as a law of nature: we may with equal right aſ-

[g] Ib. 126. [h] Ib. 154.

ſume, that decency is a branch of it; that there is ſuch a law as natural ſhame, modeſty, and decorum.

Let us hear a little what the great *Roman* orator, who was, at leaſt, as good a philoſopher, as good a judge of nature, and natural obligations, as the late noble ſceptic; let us hear what that diligent inquirer had to ſay upon the foundations of modeſty, and decorum. [1] "He aſſerts it to be a remarkable "privilege of the human race, that of all "creatures, man alone can diſcern what order "and decency are, and determine the proper "bounds of moderation: that of the objects "of ſight no other being can determine the "beauty and gracefulneſs and ſymmetry of "parts: but that reaſon in man can transfer "theſe ideas from material objects to the "mind; and thence conclude that there is "much more beauty, and conſiſtency, and "regularity to be obſerved in words and "actions; leſt any thing be done in an un-"becoming manner: that nature hath aſſigned "to man this character of great preeminence "above other animals, a character of con-"ſtancy, moderation, and modeſty: that a "firſt obligation deducible from this duty

[1] Tull. de Offic. Lib. 1. cap. 4, 28, &c.

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"of decorum is, to behave ourſelves agreea-
"bly to nature; that its influence will be
"ſeen in regulating our conduct by nature:
"that our conduct will be then approved,
"when it is conformed to nature: in ſhort,
"that accompliſhed virtue and decorum are
"convertible terms, and coincident in their
"very eſſence: that what is completely vir-
"tuous is decent, and what is decent is vir-
"tuous." From hence we ſee what this great philoſopher thought of modeſty; that it is a virtue founded in nature, and the natural relations of things, not dependent upon cuſtom or faſhion, or vain imaginations and caprices of man, or pride of man.

But we chriſtians have fundamental principles to inforce the virtue by ſtill an higher authority than the mere deductions of man. Let us paſs then from the *Roman* to the great *Chriſtian* orator; who, of the two, will always have the greater weight in this place, though leſs perhaps with the noble author's friends. A full comprehenſive precept of decorum is delivered to us in the text. And in his own example no man could be more obſervant of decorum than St. *Paul*. He hath left us a ſpeedy, ingenuous apology for himſelf, when he once had inadvertently tranſgreſſed it, before the high-prieſt. His

ſpeeches before *Felix*, and king *Agrippa*, his epiſtle to *Philemon*, and many paſſages of thoſe to the *Corinthians* are maſterly inſtances of modeſt and polite addreſs. They are proofs that the apoſtle muſt have been ſtudious of all the becoming methods of demeanor, and application to the hearts of men, who could thus command them upon every fit occaſion, with ſo much readineſs and genteel facility.

Thus have I enlarged, perhaps longer than your patience can well excuſe me, upon the ſeveral heads of duty contained in the precept of the text; urging them not merely as of natural and chriſtian obligation, but as neceſſary branches alſo of academic diſcipline. For as duties of practice indeed they become ſubjects of daily regard to every chriſtian; but as matters of ſcience they become, in places of liberal education, ſubjects of early enquiry to the induſtrious ſtudent: that by general principles treaſured up in ſeaſon particular practice may afterwards be well conducted: that the ſervant of God whether in the miniſtry of the church, or any civil office of the ſtate, may in his province be able to ſatisfy the ſcrupulous, to reclaim the vicious, and to confirm the well-diſpoſed mind: that in doubtful caſes, he may be furniſhed with materials

terials for the ſolution of difficulties. For doubtful caſes will ariſe from the various occurrences of life, under every head of duty; and the dubious mind is to be rendered eaſy and ſecure. Maxims and diſtinctions early learnt will ſeaſonably occur, for the ſolution of ſcruples in others, or the prevention of them in ourſelves: peace to our own minds, and to thoſe of our fellow members in ſociety, will be preſerved. Nature here will proceed a great way in pointing out what duty is: natural conſcience will ſuggeſt much: natural ſentiments of truth, juſtice, and decorum will preſent themſelves: theſe in general will be the ſame, or analogous at leaſt amongſt all mankind, where nature has not been greatly violated by long habits of national vice. But ſtill natural reaſon is weak: and wherever it *is* weak, chriſtian revelation comes in graciouſly to its ſuccour. Yet the books of revelation will in ſome inſtances want to be explained, at this diſtance of time from their firſt delivery. Cuſtoms, figures, and alluſions become obſcured by antiquity. Theſe are to be inveſtigated. Here then ancient truth becomes an object of purſuit: the ſcholar muſt retire back into preceding days: he muſt retire from his acquaintance into diſtant climes: he muſt travel many hours within his own

cloſet. But though he ſometimes ſecludes himſelf from mankind, he muſt not be entirely negligent of the intereſts of mankind: though he is frequently out of the world, yet he muſt be like thoſe that are ſometimes in it. Here the other parts of the apoſtle's precept will come with full force upon him, to attend to juſtice, character, and decorum.

The inſtitution of our academic diſcipline will be fully recommended by arguments ſuggeſted in the foregoing remarks. Many are the advantages which attend this, and her ſiſter nurſery of learning within this kingdom: ſome of them almoſt peculiar to themſelves, *all* friendly to pure and polite literature. It would be needleſs to enlarge here upon the benefits, which you feel, much better than I can expreſs, from the very ample collections of writings ready to be conſulted, both in ancient and modern ſcience: the rules and cuſtoms inſtituted for the promotion of true religion, and ſound morality: the ſtated calls of daily addreſs in public devotion to the great diſpenſer of all intellectual abilities: the hours appointed for regular application to ſtudy: the diſtinct ſocieties into which the ſtudents are diſtributed by their ſeveral founders, for more commodious regulation:

lation: the walls to ſeclude from the converſe of the unlearned, and to confine within proper limits of inſpection: the officers within thoſe walls to guard: the tutors to convey inſtruction: the returns of public exerciſe to excite emulation: all theſe wiſe inſtitutions conſpire in promoting one great and good deſign. You cannot overlook *one* emolument ariſing from the connexion of ſtudents among themſelves, reſiding within private walls, reſtrained in ſome meaſure, whether they will, or no, to literate converſation; which will incidentally at leaſt intrude itſelf upon them within thoſe walls. That friendly commerce of learning, and eaſy exchange of knowledge, which by familiar intercourſes is carried on within theſe ſeats, is a great improvement to the labours of the young induſtrious ſtudent. Hereby he oftentimes gains much ſcience without the trouble of ſearching deeply after it; and gleans at proper ſeaſons of the day from the fields of others, whilſt his own harveſt is ſown early, and grows up amply at home in his morning hours. But let him remember, that a ſtock of ſcience muſt carefully be laid in betimes, that he may thus communicate, and receive mutual benefit: he muſt be acquainted with the merchandice of the country in which he trafficks,

trafficks, and have ſomething valuable to give, or elſe he will gain but little by the correſpondence.

It is often ſaid, let the young perſon, to be polite, learn m n betimes. But alas! it is often dangerous to learn men too ſoon, without proper principles to guard againſt them. Let him firſt liſten to univerſal rules in hiſtory, founded on the experience of ages, concerning the wiles of men, the arts of ſeduction, the inſinuations of evil morals. Then let him ſtep forth, clad in the armour of truth and righteouſneſs, and even then warily truſt himſelf before the adverſary. For it is ſaid by an apoſtle, and a ſaying it is too well grounded in experience, *that evil communications will corrupt good manners*;[k] much more will they be ready to introduce evil manners, where good ones have not already occupied the ſoil.

It is not difficult to perceive how premature acquaintance with the world, under the modern name of travelling, becomes perilous to very young, untutored minds. The moſt glaring characters, and ſuch as are moſt likely to affect them are not always the moſt

[k] 1 Cor. xv. 33.

ſtrictly

ſtrictly virtuous. Men of the brighteſt natural abilities may, according to the ſtate of human depravity, be tinctured with ſome prevailing vice or error. Many ſplendid qualifications in the example may recommend the vice; perhaps dignify luxury, debauchery, or impiety with the name of politeneſs, and eſtabliſh a vicious faſhion in a country. If a young creature then ſhall be permitted to paſs through many countries, unguarded by any ſteady principles of virtue or religion, liable to ſuck in every error, to imbibe a tincture from every vice, that ſhall ſtrike his imagination, or fall in with his complexion, in every character, which he eſteems polite, in every country, through which he paſſes, no wonder, if he ſhould return home, as he went out, without any ballaſt of judgment, an unhappy compound of vice and error, refined only in falſe notions of politeneſs, imagining himſelf accompliſhed and adorned in that, which may in reality be the degradation of human nature. For what he thinks well-eſteemed, he will learn to imitate; and ſo gather vice, as he travels through the world, even out of a good-natured fondneſs to pleaſe, and recommend himſelf to the world. The authority of the parent is at a diſtance: he has perhaps none, or no faithful monitor to con-

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trol his appetites: and reaſon is not yet ſtrong enough to hold the reins: ſhame and modeſty loſe much of their reſtraint in a country unknown; which will be ſoon left; to which no return will be made; in which no future reproach can be heard: thus temptation and licentiouſneſs riot unoppoſed: he ſtays not long enough to ſee the unhappy conſequence of the vice, either in health, family, or fortune to his favourite exemplar; and he returns home only to make an unhappy experiment in himſelf. This is but too often the caſe of uneducated travellers. Whereas a few years properly employed within either of our ſeminaries of ſcience at home, would furniſh their minds with directing principles of religion and morality, to guard them againſt corruption: and with natural and civil knowledge, to qualify them for converſation and beneficial correſpondence with the beſt and moſt accompliſhed men of all countries. Some ſuch well ſecured examples have you, not long ago, ſent forth from hence; who have done credit, both in their own and foreign countries, to the place of their education: and you have other examples, of high rank and fortune, among thoſe that are now committed to your care; who promiſe to become equal ornaments.

But

But it is ſurely, it is experimentally found dangerous to diſmiſs the infant mind abroad, as ſoon as it is inclined to take its flight, vague, and unſtable, unguarded, and unreſtrained, to wander, it knows not why, nor whither; to pick up ſcatter'd ſeeds at random in its flight, over the face of the earth: where it may frequently meet with poiſon, inſtead of food; and ſuck in venom, for proper nouriſhment. The young traveller ſhould carry ſome proviſion with him, and be taught how to gather more with ſafety.

Even to manhood, deſtitute of ſound principle, the looſe converſe of the world will rather add corruption, than inſtill uſeful knowledge. And the late noble ſceptic, who hath appeared ſo ſtrenuous an advocate for vice and infidelity, ſo inveterate an adverſary to ſcience, to modeſty, to all religion, and the moſt comfortable of all human hopes, could not probably have made ſo great advances in impiety, had he not employed himſelf many years abroad, as well as at home, in gleaning up every little grain of irreligion, every little ſeed of objection which had been induſtriouſly ſown, or careleſly ſcattered upon the face of the earth, by every enemy of true philoſophy, either in his own, or foreign countries. For his late unphiloſophic legacy is ſcarce any thing

thing more than an indigeſted farrago of ſuch borrowed, frequently confuted, objections.

However, from what hath been ſaid one ſerious inference ariſes, reſpecting thoſe, who are concerned in the tuition of youth, within this, and her renowned ſiſter ſeminary: to take great care, how any one give reaſon of complaint, that the morals, or inſtruction of thoſe placed under their care, are neglected within theſe ſeats. For, if they do, great will be the reproach and the injury, by their negligence brought upon theſe ſchools. Much will be required at their hands both by God and man. For if, according to the ſon of *Sirach*, *the bread of the needful be the life of the poor*,[l] and ſevere be the imputation upon him, who defraudeth them of *the meat which periſheth*, how much more juſtly ſevere will the ſentence be againſt him, who defraudeth them, that hunger after living knowledge, of the bread which might *endure unto eternal life! But I am perſuaded better things of you, my brethren, and things accompanying ſalvation*[m] both to yourſelves, and many others.

One remark indeed may be made, in favour of our academic diſcipline, from its nature

[l] Eccl[us]. xxxiv. 21. [m] Heb. vi. 9.

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in general: that the young pupil here can never totally be neglected: becauſe if his proper guardian be leſs faithful, than he ought, yet in every ſociety there are others conſtituted in public office to ſupply, in ſome meaſure, the deficiency; to watch over morals; to give inſtructions in public lectures; to exhort, admoniſh, and correct. A reſource, which cannot be ſo ſecurely provided for, where the immature pupil rambles from one nation to another, unacquainted with his own, under the care of one ſingle preceptor, who may be faithleſs abroad, as well as at home, and where the unfaithfulneſs will be of more dreadful, irremediable conſequence.

But for the encouragement of thoſe, who are ſolicitouſly engaged here in the uſeful employment of tuition, one advantage may deſerve to be mentioned, incidentally ariſing to themſelves from the induſtrious diſcharge of their duty: that whilſt they diligently inſtruct others, they improve themſelves. Hints will ariſe for the illuſtration, or confirmation of their own knowledge, whilſt they are endeavouring to give clear and convincing evidence to others. The perſon then who is ſparing of that inſtruction, which he ought to give, will be proportionably penurious to himſelf of that which he might receive from his own induſtry

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in communicating knowledge: will ſeldom be found ſo ſtudious as he ought, by private cultivation beſtowed upon himſelf, to add to his own ſtock of ſcience. For where you cut off the drain, the canal will ſtagnate: but it muſt amply receive, while it amply conveys the living ſtream. Whereas ſtagnant knowledge will be apt to evaporate in forgetfulneſs. So that in reſpect to theſe two ſorts of perſons will be fully verified that ſaying of *Solomon: there is, that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth; and there is, that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.*[n]

May every one in theſe ſocieties, who hath any concern for the reputation of the community, wherein he reſideth, diſcharge punctually the duty of his reſpective province, whether in private tuition, or in public diſcipline! And then no objection can ariſe to academic inſtitution: much benefit will ariſe to the ſtate. Many are uſually called together at this ſeaſon, according to annual cuſtom, to receive full teſtimony of their education in their reſpective degrees compleated; to be diſmiſſed, as it were, by their common parent, with their ſeveral credentials, to their reſpective employments and profeſſions in life:

[n] Prov. xi. 24.

ſome

ſome ſtill to be retained within her walls for the education of others. May all, as they regard their common parent, who nurtured them, as they deſire to promote the glory of God, or the good of the ſtate, be conſcientiouſly faithful in their reſpective provinces! And may every one who enjoys any office in this place, uſe his utmoſt endeavours to cultivate herein true religion, uſeful learning, every ſocial, civil, and private virtue; in ſhort, whatſoever things are juſtly eſteemed praiſeworthy within your own gates; and whatſoever things may be of good report abroad!

Let this be thy aim, and let this be thy praiſe, ô ancient city of ſcience! Theſe things if thou doſt regularly conſult, and zealouſly promote; then, of the ſons, whom thou ſendeſt forth, many will daily add to thy reputation, and they that proſper by thy inſtructions, will, upon every good occaſion, be ready to ſhew, that they love thee: they will pray for *peace within thy walls*; and no good man will envy plenteous encouragement within thy gates: many *even for their brethren, and companions ſake will wiſh thee proſperity: yea, becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God, they will ſeek to do thee good.*[o]

[o] Pſ. cxxii. 7, 8, 9.

DISCOURSE V.

The Scripture Doctrine of Predeſtination ſtated and explained. —— Preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, on *Sunday*, *June* 18, 1758. Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houſes.

ROM. VIII. 30.

Moreover whom He did predeſtinate, them He alſo called, and whom He called, them He alſo juſtified.

FROM a miſconſtruction of this, and miſapplication of ſome other paſſages of holy ſcripture, prepoſſeſſions have ariſen very injurious to chriſtianity; errors fatal to the ſecurity and peace of the chriſtian mind; errors equally deſtructive to the cauſe of virtue

and religion, as to the real intereſts of thoſe, in whom they prevail; in a temporal view perhaps advantageous to ſome few deſigning men; but matter of unwarrantable preſumption to the credulouſly ſelf-ſufficient, or of anxious deſpondency, and, in the end, terrible deſpair to the melancholic pious chriſtian.

The misfortune is, that men are apt to lay hold of particular texts of ſcripture, as detached ſentences, unconnected with any context, and fix them in their minds, as diſtinct principles; without conſidering any reference they may bear to the whole chain of the diſcourſe from whence they were taken, or any dependency their true meaning may have thereupon. And when the foundation hath thus been laid in error, imagination and fancy are ready to compleat the ſuperſtructure: whilſt the different complexion and conſtitution of the builder preſide over the work, and give a different turn or faſhion to the frame of the edifice. Thus is the word of truth itſelf by injurious perverſion made the unhappy baſis of falſhood; and thus the paſſage before us hath unfortunately ſuffered, having been miſapplied to ſtamp upon the minds of men wrong impreſſions of the divine œconomy of love or juſtice in the government of the moral world.

For

For perſons of a melancholic caſt or temperament, ſuch as are apt to terrify themſelves with fruitleſs, nay worſe than fruitleſs, with pernicious ſpeculations about the danger and difficulties of their ſalvation, and in their imaginations dwell upon the rigor of divine ſeverity, have hence alarmed their fears with vain conceits of an abſolute predeſtination of ſome to eternal miſery: and warranted, as they think, by the authority of St. *Paul*, have frightened themſelves, and others into groundleſs unreaſonable apprehenſions about their future everlaſting ſtate. Whilſt other perſons of a more ſelf-favourable credulity, whoſe imaginations run high, whoſe ſpirits flow in a fuller vein, are apt to feed their fancies with ſoothing ſpeculations of capricious mercy, and undiſtinguiſhing goodneſs in the Deity, and equally groundleſs notions of an abſolute election of ſome to eternal happineſs; always flattering themſelves, that they are in the fortunate number of thoſe, whom they ſtile the *elect*; for no other reaſon that can be aſſigned perhaps, but becauſe it is their fortune to be attached to one little ſect, or profeſſion of religion, without obeying either the moral, or ſocial precepts of any true religion at all. As if the Judge of all the earth would, in the great day of ac-

counts, deal partially with his creatures, and neither condemn, nor reward them for their own perſonal behaviour, for their uſe of the talents, or abilities, which He hath given them; but for his own arbitrary preconceptions of love, or diſlike towards them. Foraſmuch as they thus make the eternal happineſs or miſery of rational agents an act of fortuitous determination, or (pardon the irreverence of the expreſſion, as well as the inconſiſtency of the terms) an act of original *prejudice* in the *all-juſt* Being, without any regard either to the private virtues or vices of men. An opinion totally ſubverſive of morality, as of all religion!

For if it can be ſuppoſed, that the almighty, irreſiſtible One hath abſolutely decreed before-hand, from all eternity, the neceſſary ſalvation of any man, this will take away the neceſſity of his own voluntary labours and purſuits after it; or elſe render them neceſſary and involuntary, and ſo he will be no longer a free-agent: or if again, on the other hand, God hath abſolutely decreed the eternal deſtruction of any man, this will diſcourage him from ſeeking, by his own virtue, after what he cannot attain, everlaſting happineſs. But far be it from the judge of all the earth to deal unjuſtly or capriciouſly by

by his creatures, to give them an apearance of free agency, and choice in acting, without a power of chuſing: or to make any of them neceſſarily miſerable without their own fault, that be far from him!

It cannot therefore, I conceive, be a part unſerviceable to the cauſe of virtue and piety; and, as to ſatisfy the doubts or ſcruples, or uneaſineſs of any of our fellow-creatures, is at all times an office of humanity and chriſtian benevolence, it will not, I preſume, be thought a fruitleſs ſubject of inquiry;

Firſt, to examine the true deſign and meaning of the apoſtle in this paſſage;

Secondly, to make an obſervation or two upon St. *Paul*'s expreſſions in general relative to this point from the titles, which he gives in general to his chriſtian converts: from whence we may ſee, how far the doctrine of predeſtination, whether as delivered in ſcripture, or ſtated in the articles of our church, has been frequently miſrepreſented and miſunderſtood among chriſtians; and then,

Thirdly, to conclude with a religious inference from the whole.

For it may be of uſe to thoſe, who are called upon to ſubſcribe articles, eſpecially to the younger part of this audience, to ſtate before them fairly from ſcripture, and the body of the articles themſelves, the true ſenſe maintained, in which our church means any one of its articles ſhould be underſtood.

The heads laid down will furniſh us with matter ſufficient for the preſent, and a following diſcourſe; and they cannot be deemed fruitleſs or unſeaſonable topicks of inquiry at a time, when growing enthuſiaſm is apt to fill ſome men's heads with fantaſtic notions of their abſolute predeſtination to life, in a fancied preeminence over their brethren, above any poſſibility of falling from grace or glory: in like manner to terrify others with equally groundleſs fears and apprehenſions of their predeſtination to eternal miſery, by a haſty excluſion of all thoſe from a capacity of obtaining grace, or inheriting glory, who do not, nay cannot pretend to feel, what they call their *ſenſible* impulſes. In the mean while ſcepticiſm takes advantage of their miſinterpretation of this, and ſome other paſſages of ſcripture, to form exceptions from thence againſt chriſtianity itſelf; from its miſrepreſentation, as is objected, of the ſupreme Being, in his œconomy over moral agents.

For

For thus it hath been alledged with a ſneer by a late, noble, malignant ſceptic, that, "the God of *Paul*," as he calls him, "creates ſome rational beings with a determination to ſave them, and others only to damn them."[a] "And the divines of our church," he ſays, "are obliged to ſwear that they adopt this doctrine, when they ſubſcribe the thirty nine articles."[b] The preſumption of ſome overheated imaginations, I fear, hath given but too much reaſon for this cenſure upon a part of the ſacred writings miſrepreſented. Whereas neither *Paul*, nor any other inſpired writer advances any ſuch doctrine, nor does true chriſtianity give reaſon to embrace any ſuch opinion; but the direct contrary. And as to the article of our church, it is from a miſunderſtanding of the true ſenſe in which ſhe deſires it to be ſubſcribed, that the charge againſt it ariſes. There may be ſome difficulty or embarraſſment in the manner of expreſſion; but its true intent will be aſcertained, agreeable to the point before us, by an examination of the whole article, eſpecially when compared with the whole body

[a] See Boling. Phil. Eſſ. Vol. 5. p. 149, 217. 8vo. Ed.
[b] Ib. Vol. 3. p. 174.

of

of the articles taken conſiſtently together. Let us then proceed, as was propoſed,

Firſt, to examine, and ſtate the true meaning and deſign of the apoſtle in the paſſage of ſcripture before us.

The inſpired writer, in this epiſtle, endeavours to ſet in a juſt light the righteouſneſs, or clear equity, as well as free grace and goodneſs of God, in the call of the *Gentiles*, ſubſequent to that of the *Jews*, into the goſpel-covenant: to convince his converts of the right which God had to caſt off his people, the *Jews*, when they rejected this covenant, and take to himſelf a church, or peculiar people, out of the body of the believing *Gentiles*, and to ſatisfy and aſſure them of the divine ſtedfaſtneſs, as well as of the equity of the divine purpoſes in theſe determinations of his will. From hence he proceeds to exhort his converts to a faithful diſcharge of their ſeveral chriſtian duties, and to a patient perſeverance under the ſeveral perſecutions, which they muſt endure for the ſake of *Chriſt* and his goſpel.

The whole argument, from whence the text is taken, runs thus, *For I reckon, that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy*

worthy to be compared with the glory, which ſhall be revealed to us:[c] for, after ſome intermediate verſes to confirm the point, it follows, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are called according to his purpoſe.*[d] As if he had ſaid; be not diſmayed at theſe ſufferings, which ye muſt endure for the ſake of *Chriſt* and his goſpel: for they are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall reward them: for we know, that all things, even theſe perſecutions ſhall be made to promote the ſpiritual good and welfare of thoſe that love God, to them who are called to be chriſtians, as *we* are, according to the purpoſes of his will in vouchſafing a revelation to mankind; and are admitted into covenant with him by the Goſpel, and live according to the terms of that covenant, which is the only ſure proof of our loving God required by our Saviour. To which is immediately ſubjoined, *For whom he did foreknow, them alſo he did predeſtinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren:*[e] i. e. whom in his foreknowledge he had determined to call into his church, or ſociety of chriſtian people up-

[c] Rom. viii. 18. [d] Ib. v. 28. [e] Ib. v. 29.

on

on earth, he determined, that *they* ſhould be conformed to the likeneſs of his Son: but to a likeneſs in what? firſt in *ſufferings*; for the apoſtle is here directly ſpeaking of perſecutions; and likewiſe that, if they perſevered in this conformity of patience unto the end, their reward ſhall be a conformity to him in glory. *We are*, ſaith he, in a preceding verſe, *joint-heirs with Chriſt, if ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glorified together.*[f] Here is a moral qualification required, previous to our glorification, namely patient ſuffering, if it pleaſe God ſo to try us. *Moreover whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called:* i. e. whom he had foreordained to be thus his children, and to be thus conformed in ſufferings to the image of his ſon, he determined to call, or, according to a figure of ſpeech, which puts the paſt for that which is certainly future, he *called*; i. e. he called them by the preaching of the goſpel into his church, or kingdom of grace upon earth; *and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified*, or put into a ſtate of juſtification and pardon upon true repentance; *and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*, or put into a ſtate of glorious light here, and a capacity of obtain-

[f] Rom. viii. 17.

ing

ing future glory and honour and immortality in the life to come. But then the conditions of attainment were propoſed, that they continued to love God, and perſevered in acting conformably to the dictates of his will. From hence the apoſtle's reflection is, *what ſhall we then ſay to theſe things?* The inference is very plain and obvious under a ſtate of perſecution; *if God be for us, who can be againſt us?* If God hath been thus gracious to us in calling us to be chriſtians, and hath deſigned ſuch great things for us, and hath given us ſuch an earneſt of his favour, having ſent his Son to redeem us, and having admitted us into formal covenant with himſelf through *Chriſt*, why ſhould we dread the malice, or hatred, or perſecutions of men? For *He that ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things*[s] for our ſupport and happineſs? Let us perſevere in virtue and faithful ſuffering for righteouſneſs ſake, whenever called to it; for man cannot obſtruct our happineſs, unleſs we deſert ourſelves. Then follows that holy triumph of perſeverance, to which nothing but chriſtianity is equal, to which nothing is to be

[s] Rom. viii. 30—32.

compared

compared in all the triumphs of heathen philoſophy, or ſtrength of heathen eloquence; *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? In all theſe things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am perſuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*[h]

He ſpeaks here of a firm perſuaſion of mind: the words denote a ſtrong degree of moral preſumption, that the preſent ſincere among them *would* not finally fall: but were not intended to convey any idea of abſolute certainty, that they *could* not. And in reality the predeſtination, or election, here intended by the apoſtle, was the free and gracious purpoſe of God to ſelect, and confirm to himſelf a church upon earth, to ſeparate to himſelf out of the whole race of mankind a peculiar people and ſociety upon earth, diſtinguiſhed by particular privileges of light and knowledge, that in ſome part of the

[h] Rom. VIII. 35—39.

earth

earth at leaſt the worſhip of the true God might be eſtabliſhed. And their juſtification in the preſent ſtate, was the right, which theſe enlightened perſons, or true believers, *Gentile*, as well as *Jewiſh* converts had to the bleſſings and privileges of the goſpel kingdom, or kingdom of grace upon earth: not in ſuch a manner as to have the poſſeſſion of the kingdom of glory abſolutely ſecured to them, without any future labour, or endeavours of their own, or indeed without any future free-moral-agency left them: no: it was only a merciful aſſurance of pardon upon ſincere repentance, and of aid ſufficient to conduct them to that kingdom of glory, provided they made a right uſe of the divine light afforded them under the diſpenſations of grace here.

That this was the ſole meaning of the apoſtle in theſe phraſes, will appear from the whole tenor of this, and his other epiſtles: from the frequent exhortations, which he gives to theſe elect, wherein is implied, that they might fall from grace, and forfeit thoſe privileges, to which they had been admitted at their baptiſm. He every where indeed ſuppoſes, that God *may* have, and *hath* admitted ſome of his creatures into fuller degrees and privileges of light and knowledge

ledge than others. Thus he hath called ſome, for inſtance all chriſtians in general, into a covenant of ſalvation; who are therefore ſtiled, in the ſtrong, and expreſſive language of ſcripture, the *ſaved*, the *elect*, the *predeſtinated to life*, and ſo on. But then the very nature of a covenant ſuppoſes ſomething afterwards to be performed on *their* part, who are thus called, without which they ſhall loſe the privileges ſtipulated on God's part. From hence then give me leave to proceed,

Secondly, to make an obſervation or two upon St. *Paul*'s expreſſions in general relating to this point, and the titles he gives to true believers; which may tend to clear the matter before us. For from thence we may ſee, how far the doctrine of predeſtination, whether as delivered in ſcripture, or ſtated in the articles of our church, has been frequently miſrepreſented, or miſunderſtood among chriſtians. A ſubject more eſpecially ſeaſonable in this age, when on the one hand, as I have obſerved, a ſet of men have lately endeavoured to delude their chriſtian brethren with falſe notions of an abſolutely ſecure inheritance to the crown of life, and draw ſects after them by vain perſuaſions, that through a firm adherence to *their* flock, they ſhall be raiſed into ſuch a ſtate, as not to have it in

their

their power for the future, either to fall from grace, or forfeit happineſs; ſecluding at the ſame time all others from any hopes of ſalvation: reviving thereby and awakening ſome obſcure antiquated errors, which had before lain dormant in darkneſs.

On the other hand a late noble patron of infidelity has objected to St. *Paul*'s repreſentation of the Supreme Being, or, as he terms him, [1] "the God of *Paul*, that he elects "ſome of his creatures to ſalvation, and pre-"deſtinates others to damnation, even in the "womb of their mothers." From whence it is plain, that the noble writer either did not, or would not underſtand a word of St. *Paul*'s meaning in any of thoſe paſſages, or choſe not to ſtate them aright to his readers; he objects to a ſhadow raiſed by himſelf, and by ſome inconſiderate, enthuſiaſtic writers, equal enemies, in this reſpect, to the religion, to which they meant to be friends. This renders it expedient to clear St. *Paul*'s meaning in theſe paſſages by their context, or the current thread of his argumentation; whereby his whole doctrine will be immediately juſtified. For St. *Paul* ſhould be treated like other ancient, rational writers, not interpret-

[1] Boling. Phil. Eſſ. Vol. V. p. 217. Oct. Ed.

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ed by ſingle ſentences, or ſingle ſeparate texts, ſtripped of all connexion, as hath been too frequently the caſe; but by the ſcope of argument, and plain deſign of the writer, purſued through the whole epiſtle. Interpret him, as you would the letter of a ſenſible friend, not by a ſingle, detatched phraſe, or ſentence, but by the whole conſidered together.

True believers are indeed frequently ſtiled by St. *Paul* the *elect*, the *predeſtinated* to life. Which were expreſſions intended to denote to them, *not*, that they were now put into a ſtate from which they could not fall, that the grace of God, which was given them, was irreſiſtible, and that they were abſolutely ſecured of eternal happineſs: but were intended to denote only goſpel-privileges, or external advantages of the kingdom of grace in this world, of which, as free-agents, they might, or might not make a right application, as they pleaſed: expreſſions intended to denote to them, that they were now in their chriſtian capacity admitted into peculiar favours by the God of grace, and in this ſenſe indeed become his elect people, being diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of mankind by extraordinary means of light and knowledge; that they were put into a way of ſalvation attainable

able by a proper uſe of theſe means; that they were before ordained of God in the purpoſes of his will to be *called*, or invited into theſe privileges of light and knowledge.

Now that this is the true, and whole ſenſe of predeſtination, as delivered in ſcripture by St. *Paul*, will appear from hence, that theſe *elect*, theſe *predeſtinated* perſons, according to the judgment of the ſame apoſtle, ſtood in need of exhortation, of admonition, of encouragement, and of threatning. Which implies them ſtill to be left free-moral agents, capable of ſinning, or acting righteouſly; of incurring the execution of theſe threats, or obtaining the promiſes.

For thus the ſame apoſtle, who indites his epiſtle to the *Romans* in general as to perſons *beloved of God, called to be ſaints*, and ſpeaks of them as *juſtified, elected*, and *having peace with God*, yet ſoon after exhorts theſe very *elect*, to *walk in newneſs of life*, to *preſent their bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*; to *awake out of ſleep*; which intimates, that ſome of them might yet ſlumber in vice and error. He admoniſhes them to caſt off the works of darkneſs; which implies that ſome of them were yet cloathed therewith, as with garments of iniquity. And leſt the willingneſs of the ſpirit ſhould

give way to the weakneſs of the fleſh, under the ſeverity of chriſtian ſufferings, he encourages their perſeverance under *theſe light afflictions, which endure but for a moment*, by the proſpect of *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; which ſhews, that encouragement was not needleſs: he threatens them, that notwithſtanding their election, and all their goſpel privileges, yet if they *lived* after *the fleſh*, if they lived in ſubjection to their carnal appetites, they ſhould periſh.

To the chriſtians in general, that were at *Corinth*, he writeth, as to them that were *ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be ſaints, called of God unto the fellowſhip of his Son.*[k] Yet he tells them ſoon after, *I brethren could not ſpeak unto you, as to ſpiritual, but as unto carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, ſtrife, diviſion, are ye not carnal?*[l] This ſanctification therefore could not mean abſolute, but relative ſanctity; great in compariſon with that of other men: not a neceſſary, impelled ſanctity of morals, but a profeſſion of ſanctity; which might in charity indeed ſuppoſe good morals, but in ſome inſtances did not prevail.

To the *Epheſians* he writes, that God had *choſen* them in Chriſt *before the foundation of*

[k] 1 Cor. 2, 9.

[l] 1 Cor. III. 1, 3.

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the world, having *predeſtinated* them *unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will*; that they had *obtained redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins: in whom alſo they had obtained an inheritance, being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him, who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will, that they might be to the praiſe of his glory, who firſt truſted in Chriſt.*[m] What expreſſions of predeſtination can be ſtronger than theſe? Yet the ſame apoſtle exhorts them, who were thus *choſen* and *predeſtinated*, *to put on the whole armour of God, that they might be able to withſtand in the evil day* of trial, and, *having done all, to ſtand.* Which exhortation ſuppoſes, that they had ſtill enemies to encounter, by whom they *might* be overcome. He admoniſhes them therefore *not to be deceived by vain words, not to walk in the vanity of their minds*, preſuming upon their chriſtian privileges, *to have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs.* Such admonitions then were not thought unneceſſary by the apoſtle for this *choſen*, this *predeſtinated* people, leſt they ſhould yield in the day of probation, leſt their morals ſhould

[m] Epheſ. 1. 4, &c.

be corrupted by evil communications. Which is a plain proof, their election, or predeſtination extended only to certain goſpel-privileges in this life, but gave them no title to ſure admiſſion into life eternal, without a ſtedfaſt, and ſincere obedience to the precepts of the goſpel.

They were taken in ſhort into an holy ſociety, or fellowſhip; into a ſocial profeſſion of ſanctity, wherein light and ſalvation were promiſed to ſincere faith and obedience: whilſt other *Gentiles* were left doubtful and uncertain about a future ſtate; ignorant whether God would admit of any atonement for ſin; whether an imperfect obedience would be accepted by him. By an heightened figure of ſpeech therefore, which puts the end for the means, the former were addreſſed under the denomination of the *ſanctified*, the *ſaved*, the *juſtified*, &c. as having put on a profeſſion of ſanctity, as having the means of juſtification and ſalvation in their hands.

And no doubt, great matter of ſatisfaction muſt it have been to the firſt ſincere chriſtian converts, to reflect on the doubts and uncertainties from which they were delivered, under which they had lived in their heathen ſtate: full of gratitude muſt have been the reflection, that they were choſen out of mankind

kind to enjoy theſe peculiar privileges; that they had not only a gracious proſpect of ſalvation, but the terms of it alſo clearly propoſed to them. A great deliverance it muſt have been eſteemed by them, when compared with the ſtate of other *Gentiles*, to be put into a condition of pardon, into a capacity of being fully and for ever happy. The apoſtle therefore charitably ſuppoſing them to walk, and in order to excite them through gratitude the more ſtedfaſtly to walk, according to theſe privileges of their vocation, thinks he cannot too highly magnify their ſituation and character, as chriſtians, by ſtiling them *elect, beloved of God, called to be ſaints in Chriſt, juſtified, predeſtinated to life*, and ſo on. And the great privileges to which they were admitted, and the end deſigned by him in theſe addreſſes, namely to encourage them againſt perſecutions, ſufficiently juſtify the ſtrong expreſſions of the apoſtle.

But then leſt they ſhould grow preſumptuous upon theſe bleſſings, and ſpiritually proud of theſe divine favours, we find religious inferences, and exhortations to holineſs every where drawn from their enjoyment of theſe privileges. The apoſtles indeed, to raiſe in their converts a juſt ſenſe of the abundant riches of divine grace under the goſpel diſ-

penſation, opened to them all the fountains of his favour; the ſurprizing method in which their redemption had been accompliſhed and conveyed to them; the diſmal circumſtances of darkneſs they had before been under, in their heathen ſtate; the glory and honour to which they were advanced by their new adoption into the chriſtian covenant: that they were now, according to the expreſſive language of inſpiration, the temple or church of the living God, a ſacred family adopted by the moſt high, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with *Chriſt*. But then we find theſe glorious ſcenes of life diſplayed before them in order to excite and animate an holy gratitude; we find them warmly urged and intreated thereby not to receive this *grace of God in vain*; which ſhews that it *might* have been received in vain; but to improve it into ſolid principles of virtue, into lively fruits of righteouſneſs: we find frequent cautions given them againſt falling from their high ſtation by too indulgent a compliance with their carnal appetites; which proves, that the apoſtle thought them not incapable of falling: we find the prize of life ſet before them, for their encouragement in the race of virtue, which ſhews that encouragement was not needleſs to animate their perſeverance in that race: we find

find the alarming terrors of a future judgment, all the horrors and torments of a dreadful eternity, to fright them from the paths of vice; which proves the ſanction of threatning not to have been unneceſſary to deter them from evil. We find them therefore ſtill remaining moral agents, ſtill obnoxious to fall, though ſtanding upon the ground of ſuch ſpiritual graces.[n]

[n] Thus again St. *Paul* prayeth to God for his converts the Corinthians, *that they do no evil*, 2 Cor. xiii. 7. which ſuppoſeth, that in ſome degree they might be yet prone to evil. He exhorts them to *examine themſelves whether they be in the faith:* ib. v. 5. which implies, that they might yet err from their right holy faith. He ſuppoſeth, that they might yet become *reprobates*, or perſons diſapproved of God for their conduct. *Know ye not your own ſelves, how that* Jeſus Chriſt *is in you, except ye be reprobates.* ib. Here is no language of an impeccable ſtate of chriſtian perfection, incapable of erring. Nor would their bare poſſeſſion of goſpel-privileges entitle them to neceſſary acceptance with God: for in another epiſtle he ſaith, *But of thoſe who ſeemed to be ſomewhat, whatſoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's perſon*, Gal. ii. 6. *He withſtood* Peter *to the face* in one inſtance, *becauſe he was to be blamed*; for he and his aſſociates in that inſtance *walked not uprightly according to the truth of the goſpel*, v. 11—14. To his *Galatian* converts he writeth, *have ye ſuffered ſo many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.* Gal. iii. 4. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye ſhould not obey the truth?* Gal. v. 7. *This I ſay then, walk in the ſpirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh.* v. 16. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap.* Gal. vi. 7. To the firſt *Epheſian* chriſtians he ſaith, *I beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith ye are called.* Eph. iv. 1. *See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe.* Eph. v. 15. *Be ye not unwiſe*, v. 17.

Here then is no aſſignation of men from the foundation of the world, or from their mother's womb to eternal miſery; no abſolute election of any to eternal happineſs, without a regular conformity of morals, as well as faith, to the divine will.*

In ſhort, as I cannot preſume, that your patience ſhould permit me at preſent to purſue my remarks any further upon this head; as I have endeavoured to lay before you the doctrine of an apoſtle, and propoſe in my following diſcourſe to ſhew the conſiſtency of our own church in her ſentiments with thoſe of the ſame apoſtle; I ſhall conclude at this time with this one caution to the leſs guarded, if any can be lightly guarded in this place, that you ſuffer not yourſelves to be deluded by any falſe hopes of juſtification or ſalvation without virtue, or terrified by falſe fears of abſolute reprobation without ſpontaneous vice. For in oppoſition to any groundleſs ſelf-flattery, or deſpondent apprehenſions of this kind,

* Here therefore I will readily join hands with our author in his aſſertion, though not altogether in his own meaning; when he ſays of this doctrine of abſolute predeſtination to happineſs, or miſery: "Whether St. *Paul* intended to teach it, "is made to ſome perſons, but I confeſs not to myſelf, doubt-"ful; that *Chriſt* did not teach it, is certain." For it is equally certain, and without doubt, that St. *Paul* did not teach it. Bolingb. Phil. Eſſ. Vol. III. p. 174. Oct. Ed.

we have, as it were in one ſhort line, the aſſurance of the divine word, which cannot err, or contradict itſelf, that *in every nation*, according to the light, which every man therein enjoys, and the opportunities of improvement given him, *whoſoever feareth God, and worketh righteouſneſs, he*, and indeed he only, *is accepted with him.*[p]

[p] Acts x. 35.

DISCOURSE VI.

ROM. VIII. 30.

Moreover, whom He did predeſtinate, them He alſo called, and whom He called, them He alſo juſtified.

MEN of weak heads, or wicked deſigning minds have made an evil uſe of this text. They have rendered it ſubſervient to very miſchievous purpoſes, and the ſupport of very abominable notions, of ſentiments entirely derogatory from God's honour, prejudicial to chriſtian religion, foreign to the apoſtle's intention, inconſiſtent wiih free-agency, contrary to the cauſe of virtue, abſurd upon every principle of ſound reaſon.

It hath been in particular notoriouſly applied to the ſervice of enthuſiaſm, as the miſconſtruction of it hath often been the product of enthuſiaſm: it hath been made ſerviceable to the promotion of little preſumptuous ſects,

or

or the private intereſts of vain leaders of ſects. While the common enemy of chriſtianity hath reaped the advantage; founding objections againſt the chriſtian cauſe upon the abſurdity of its ſuppoſed doctrines, and its miſrepreſentations of the Supreme Being in thoſe imaginary doctrines; which have been cheriſhed only in the brains of deluded enthuſiaſts, or forged by the invention of perverſe ſceptics; not exiſting at all in the chriſtian charter, which are the books of holy writ.

It will be more apparent ſtill, how groſsly this, and ſome other texts of the ſame epiſtle have been miſrepreſented, if we only conſider yet a little more fully the ſcope, deſign, and connexion of the apoſtle's argumentation therein. The occaſion of the argument was this. The *Jews* were highly offended at one part of chriſtian doctrine, that the *Gentiles* were now invited into covenant with God, on a ground upon which *they* formerly had ſtood *alone*; that the *Jewiſh* nation, in their political capacity, for their obdurate infidelity, and hardened wickedneſs, were now to be excluded; that their conſtitution was ſoon to be diſſolved, and their main body caſt out of God's temporal, and viſible kingdom; that God had choſen to himſelf another peculiar people made up of true believers in his Son

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the true *Meſſiah*, conſiſting of the remnant of devout *Jews* that embraced the goſpel, and the greater body of converted *Gentiles*; that this church, or ſociety of men, was now to become the peculiar object of divine protection, favoured with ſingular privileges of divine light, knowledge and aſſiſtance. The apoſtle therefore endeavours to ſatisfy the *Jewiſh* nation, and the *Jewiſh* converts to Chriſtianity, of the equity of the divine diſpenſations in this inſtance of œconomy; to ſhew them, that God had an inconteſtible right to chuſe the *Gentiles* and reject the *Jews*; to favour the one with any earthly privileges, to exclude the other from any extraordinary favour; that in reſpect of any promiſes made to *Abraham*, he was free to confer them upon any branch of *Abraham*'s ſeed by *Iſaac*, and not obliged to confine them merely to *Jacob*; that the *Iſraelites* might forfeit, and be deprived of thoſe privileges, which they enjoyed in this world, only as being the church of God, and ſo long as they continued to be his people; that this inherent right of rejecting the main body of the *Iſraelites*, and of chuſing others out of every nation under heaven, was no more than had been affirmed in the writings of their own law-giver, *Moſes*; and was agreeable to the

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predictions of ſeveral of their prophets: for that temporary favours, or temporary protections granted to nations are matters of mere arbitrary diſpoſal; that ſuch ſocieties have no claim of merit to ſuch favours; that God may grant them to what nations, and for what time he pleaſeth, and may revoke them, as he pleaſeth; that the creature hath no right to call the Creator to account for any diſcretionary diſpoſals of favour; much leſs have creatures any right to complain, if they have forfeited the protection by their own tranſgreſſions. For God had as good a right to reject the *Jews* for their obſtinate unbelief in his Son, when they had hardened their hearts againſt the true *Meſſiah*, as he had to deſtroy *Pharaoh* and his hoſt, when they had hardened themſelves in idolatry againſt *Moſes*, and againſt himſelf, the true God of *Iſrael*, notwithſtanding his ſeveral diſplays of divine power before them. And when *Pharaoh*'s heart was thus hardened by his own wickedneſs, God had a right no doubt, if he thought fit, to raiſe him up higher for this reaſon, that he might make his juſtice and his power ſeen more conſpicuouſly in his fall. For wicked men may by their impenitence make themſelves ſubſervient to divine purpoſes by the diſplay of juſtice in puniſhment. And

God

God is ſaid only, in the language of ſcripture, to harden them, whom he permits, after all gracious means have been uſed for their recovery, to harden themſelves: i. e. he hath given them ſuch diſplays of his power, juſtice, forbearance, and goodneſs, that, if they are not reclaimed thereby, they muſt appear to be more hardened, or to have hearts harder than they had before: this is the ſole ſenſe of his hardening them.

But ſtill national favours are arbitrary diſpoſals: and God may make one nation of his creatures at one time for honour, i. e. relative honour, and another for relative diſhonour in the eyes of mankind, without accounting to them for his conduct; or without *viſible* purpoſes diſplayed, though he may have purpoſes treaſured up in the ſtores of infinite wiſdom.

Thus he deſtined *Jacob*, and his poſterity to greater privileges than *Eſau*, and his offſpring, before their children, or they themſelves were yet born. For ſo, ſaith St. *Paul*, it is recorded by your own lawgiver, *Moſes*, for whoſe rites you *Jews* are ſo ſtrenuous, *that the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election* in bleſſings and privileges upon earth *might ſtand, not of works*, or any claim of man's merit, but of the

the free favour *of him that calleth, it was ſaid, the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*;[a] the poſterity of the younger ſhall be ſuperior to, and a nation much more proſperous and happy than, that of the elder. *As it is written* Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated*:[b] that is, I have preferred *Jacob*, and have beſtowed peculiar favours and bleſſings upon his poſterity: but *Eſau* and his poſterity have I made ſubordinate in my diſpoſals, and have not been ſo liberal in my donations to them.

Now ſubordination of ſtates may be very neceſſary ſometimes for the good of the whole ſyſtem, as the ſubordination of individuals is for the good of ſocieties. The ſeaſonable cultivation and improvement of the whole earth by turns may be promoted thereby. Arts and ſciences have been certainly propagated thereby. For ſome nations are only to be improved by the diſcipline of ſuperiors. Conqueſts, and captivities, as well as tranſmigrations of colonies have tranſmitted arts, and communications of the fruits of induſtry among men. Some rude unpoliſhed nations have been tutored into civil habits only by ſuch rough, unſavoury diſcipline. And though the law of arms may not always in every in-

[a] Rom. ix. 11, 12, 13. [b] Rom. ix. 13.

ſtance

ſtance have been the moſt juſtifiable, in its original motives, or in its final deciſions, or in the hearts of the principal agents, yet by that all-contriving wiſdom, which worketh good out of evil, out of the evil paſſions, and diſſentions of men, we ſee it hath been often made the inſtrumental means of diſſeminating many uſeful improvements. For ſciences have often travelled with conqueſts. And thus we ſee temporary proſperity fluctuating from one nation to another, all in ſubſerviency to the purpoſes of the divine will in the government of man, to the will of him, who ſuffereth the tide and the waves to roar, and yet at length curbeth their power, and ſetteth them their bounds, which they ſhall not paſs; to the will of him, to whom all his works, and means, and meaſures of œconomy are known from the beginning of the world.

But you will aſk perhaps, how does it appear, that the purpoſe of God in the election of *Jacob*, and reprobation of *Eſau* related to their poſterity in a *national* capacity, rather than to the individual men themſelves? It appears from the very words of the hiſtory, where this election, here alluded to by the apoſtle, is recorded, from whence he quotes this paſſage, *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*. For thus we read; *Gen.* xxv. 33. *and the*

Lord ſaid unto her, i. e. unto *Rebecca*, *two* NATIONS *are in thy womb, and two manner of* PEOPLE *ſhall be ſeparated from thy bowels; and the one* PEOPLE *ſhall be ſtronger than the other* PEOPLE, *and the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*. This election we ſee was *national*; relative to national preeminence. Other paſſages of ſcripture will not allow us to ſay, that the *Iſraelites* were herein every man of them elected to eternal life; becauſe there were afterwards very wicked men among the *Iſraelites*, who were remarkable objects of God's diſpleaſure. Nor does ſervitude, or the phraſe to *ſerve*, any where in ſcripture ſignify *damnation*, or being eternally *condemned*; nor conſequently does its oppoſite ſignify *eternal life*, or abſolute election to eternal happineſs. The text then here quoted was never intended to denote final retribution to the particular perſons literally nominated; but general diſpenſations of temporal or ſpiritual favours to nations deſcended from them. When it ſays therefore, Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated*, it is not meant, I have predeſtinated the one to eternal happineſs, and the other to eternal miſery, without any perſonal merit or demerit of their own, as ſome have miſunderſtood the paſſage. No: no ſuch thing is meant.

But

But it is only a ſtrong expreſſion of eaſtern language denoting the admiſſion of the one, with his whole race, to certain temporal, and even ſpiritual advantages upon earth, to which the poſterity of the other was *not* admitted. It has no reference at all to the final eternal ſtate of theſe men, or their poſterity, or God's dealing with them as individuals in the great day of impartial retribution. It is no more than this, I have placed the one, and his deſcendants, behind the other, in my diſpoſal of temporal eſteem, or kindneſs.

This might appear further, if further proof were needful, from the prophet *Malachi*, for when it is there ſaid, *I loved* Jacob, *and hated* Eſau,[c] we ſee immediately explained, what is meant by this *hatred:* it is immediately referred to temporal poſſeſſions: for the words immediately following, as the effect or conſequence of this hatred, relate only to temporal demeans. *I laid his mountains, and his heritage waſte for the dragons of the wilderneſs.*[d] God cannot naturally in a ſtrict ſenſe *hate* any of his creatures, or in any other ſenſe than as by their obſtinate wickedneſs they become objects of his juſtice. But the *hatred* here ſpoken of was only a

[c] Mal. i. 2, 3. [d] Ib.

comparative diſtribution: i. e. the temporal regard ſhewn to *Eſau* was leſs than *that* ſhewn to *Jacob*, beſide ſome temporal puniſhment, inflicted upon *Eſau*, and his poſterity, for their ſubſequent courſe of iniquity. And therefore by way of analogy to the influence of human paſſions, or the ſprings and motives of human actions, where it is hatred, or hateful anger, that is uſually the cauſe of diſinheriting a ſon, this leſs degree of temporal regard, or diſinheriting of *Eſau*, is in ſtrong eaſtern language comparatively ſtiled *hatred*.

The ſame term of *hating* is uſed in the very ſame ſenſe by our Saviour in St. *Luke*'s goſpel, where it is ſaid, *If any man come to me, and* HATE *not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters, yea and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple.*[a] All that is meant is no more than this, if any man poſtpone not the authority and intereſts of his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters, yea and ſecurity of his own life alſo, when interfering with me, and my goſpel, he cannot be my diſciple. It cannot be underſtood to mean, that he ſhould *literally hate* his father and mother, and wife and children,

[a] Luke xiv. 26.

and

and brethren and ſiſters; to be entirely negligent of whoſe ſupport and intereſt, St. *Paul* ſaith, would render him *worſe than an infidel*; it cannot mean this therefore, any more than it can literally mean, that he ſhould *hate* his own life, which is the gift of God, for which he ought to be thankful, and which his very nature obliges him to love. Such kind of hatred therefore cannot be a neceſſary qualification for a good chriſtian, or a good diſciple of the goſpel, which is the gift of the God of love, as would diſqualify a man for being a good moral heathen: for the goſpel is a law of amity: it is not only a law of true ſelf-love; but of love to all men, eſpecially to our neareſt relations: nay the chriſtian hath an expreſs commandment enjoining him to *honour* his father and mother; which honour is naturally founded in love. But our Saviour's meaning is, that the authority of man, how nearly ſoever related to us, ſhould not, when we come to years of diſcretion, be ſuffered to ſtand in competition with the plain commands of God, of Chriſt, and his goſpel. Nay that the intereſts of our own lives ſhould not be permitted to obſtruct thoſe of the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind.

To return then to the apoſtle's argument: he that called *Abraham*, and annexed the

ſpecial bleſſing only to a part of his family, ſaying, *in* Iſaac *ſhall thy ſeed be called*,[f] the ſame God had a right to call the *Gentiles* afterwards into the privileges of the goſpel covenant, and to reject the *Jews* from being any longer his people under a peculiar protection, when by their obduracy in unbelief, they became altogether unworthy of his favours. For thus ſaith he to *Moſes*, *I will have mercy, on whom I will have mercy*;[g] I will confer my favours and marks of temporal kindneſs, on whom I will confer them; *and I will have compaſſion* on thoſe nations, *on whom I will have compaſſion*; and will grant them my protection. Firſt on the *Iſraelites* in the ſight of *Pharaoh*, and afterwards on the *Gentiles* in the ſight of the *Jewiſh* nation. For that by the phraſe of *having mercy*, extraordinary temporal privileges conferred on a people are expreſſed, appears from other paſſages of ſcripture. Thus the call of the *Gentiles* into the church through faith is by the ſame apoſtle expreſſed under the terms of *obtaining mercy*;[h] and likewiſe by St. *Peter*, where it is ſaid of the *Gentile* converts, *which in time paſt were not a people; but are now the people of God; which had not* OBTAINED

[f] Gen. xxi. 12. [g] Exod. xxxiii. 19. Rom. ix. 15.
[h] Rom. xi. 30.

MERCY,

MERCY, *but now have* OBTAINED MERCY:[1] i. e. are now called to the external privileges of his church and people. Thus then *hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy*, or is bountiful in his outward diſpenſations of favour, power, protection, dominion and grandeur to one people above another; and he may afford greater inward means of grace to one, than to another; but ſtill is equitably and ſufficiently gracious unto all.

The apoſtle then here ſpeaks of men *nationally*, not *perſonally*, and in reference to their *temporal*, not their *eternal* ſtate. Though their temporal privileges might, if rightly applied, greatly advance the eternal intereſts of individuals in thoſe ſtates: if miſapplied, will only enhance their puniſhment. Chriſtians are invited to eternal life, ſeparated and predeſtinated to this call and invitation; and if they will but accept of the grace, and faithfully purſue the means, they need not fear miſcarriage. The offer is God's: the acceptance and uſe of it is their own: and in this ſenſe, and this only may they be ſaid to be predeſtinated to life.

This is the full ſcope and deſign of the apoſtle in this noted chapter, which hath

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 10.

been ſo often called in to authoriſe the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination to eternal life, or reprobation to eternal miſery, without any conſideration of perſonal merit or demerit in men. And this is all that is meant by thoſe ſtrong expreſſions above-cited.

Accordingly our church, which loves to keep as near as poſſible to ſcripture language, and conſequently may ſometimes have been miſunderſtood upon that account, where it hath adopted ſcripture expreſſions, and ſcripture itſelf hath been miſrepreſented, our church, I ſay, ſhews, upon the whole, this to be her meaning, in her [k] article concerning predeſtination; where ſhe mentions at the latter end of it, who they are, to whom this doctrine can be of any comfort, that is, "only to godly perſons." And ſhe juſt before defines, who they are, whom ſhe thus ſtiles *godly perſons:* they are ſuch as "through "grace *obey* the calling," which is a ſpontaneous act; "they walk religiouſly in good "works." She ſuppoſeth indeed, as the ſcripture doth, that God *may*, and *will* grant greater meaſures of light and grace to *ſome*, than he vouchſafes to *others*, to conduct them in their way to happineſs, according as he

[k] Art. 17.

hath

hath ordained in the purpoſes of his own will. By which will he hath created different orders of beings, capable of greater or leſs enjoyments; by which will he hath created angels, as well as men: by which will he hath called ſome men into the glorious advantages of goſpel light, whilſt others are left in a ſtate of heathen ignorance.

But then ſhe doth not ſay, that he hath denied *ſufficient* means of grace to any, who will make a proper uſe of them: ſhe doth not ſay, or ſuppoſe, that he hath abſolutely predeſtinated any neceſſarily to eternal miſery: but only ſays, "that for curious and carnal "men," i. e. for men of vain curioſity, and carnal wicked lives, "to have continually "the ſentence of God's predeſtination before "their eyes," to dwell upon ſuch ſubjects in their thoughts and imaginations, is an occaſion, or inſtrument, which the devil makes uſe of for their deſtruction, by thruſting them into deſpair. "It is," ſaith the article, "a moſt dangerous downfal, or pre-"cipice, whereby the devil doth thruſt them "into deſperation, or into wretchleſſneſs of "moſt unclean living, no leſs perilous than "deſperation." You ſee, according to the article, it is not God, or his decree, which thruſts them; but the devil's ſuggeſtions, heightened

heightened by their own deſpondent, guilty imaginations. That is, their own fears, ariſing from a conſciouſneſs of their wicked lives, wrong imbibed prejudices about the œconomy of divine juſtice, a fond curioſity of prying into divine counſels, or a vanity of pretending to know ſomething of divine intentions, inflammatory conceit, for a time, and pride of their own ſpiritual excellence and ſecurity, afterwards melancholy reflections upon what they judge to be the fated lot of ſome men, and at length of themſelves; theſe, and ſuch-like ſentiments frequently ſuggeſted by their ſpiritual tempter, and much indulged in their own depraved fancies, drive them into deſpair; ſo that they either languiſh away the future part of their lives upon earth in a deſponding condition, doing nothing to the purpoſe in religion; or elſe grow wretchedly deſperate in wickedneſs. It does not ſay, but that theſe men *might* have prevented, or corrected this curioſity in themſelves, and thereby have avoided this rock of deſpair: they *might* have been leſs carnal, and conſequently leſs reaſonably fearful about their ſalvation.

The article therefore, inſtead of giving any countenance to the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination to miſery, rather condemns the

the curioſity of thoſe, who are fond of prying into the counſels of the all-wiſe, and ſhews them the evil conſequence of ſuch inquiries; that inſtead of doing any real good to them, or inducing them to amend their lives, it only plunges them into deſpair, and a more abandoned ſtate of wretched wickedneſs.

The article indeed in its general ſtile charitably ſuppoſes, as St. *Paul* does, when he indites to his converts in general, though he knew ſome individuals among them to be ſtill carnal, and unworthy of their high eſtimation, it ſuppoſes, I ſay, that they, to whom extraordinary means of grace have been vouchſafed, will in general, though not univerſally, and neceſſarily, make a proper uſe of them, not indeed by conſtraint, but by prudent and diſcreet choice. "Being endued with ſo excellent a gift of "God," it is ſaid, "they through grace "obey the calling, they walk religiouſly in "good works:" which are in themſelves deſcriptions of voluntary acts: for a *forced* conformity is not properly obedience, but compulſion; and to walk religiouſly by an abſolute conſtraint, or by election, or predeſtination, is not properly religion, but impulſe. The planets might as well deſerve a reward

reward for conſtantly perſevering in their proper orbits, as man expect it for ſuch a courſe of obedience. But it is upon terms of voluntary performance, and a rational, religious ſervice, that chriſtians may expect at length to attain everlaſting life.

Life indeed, much more an eternal life of happineſs is the free gift of God to any of his creatures; and known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. The counſels of his will are from everlaſting to everlaſting: but ſtill he hath made none of his creatures abſolutely to be miſerable without their own fault. The article indeed ſpeaks of ſome, whom he may have purpoſed "to "deliver from curſe and damnation;" i. e. from the curſe and ſentence of condemnation entailed upon mankind by the law of works, and original tranſgreſſion; to deliver by baptiſm from the natural ſtate of ſin, and ſubjection to wrath, thoſe, "whom he hath "choſen in *Chriſt*;" i. e. whom he hath invited into the chriſtian covenant, to waſh them in the laver of regeneration from the original ſtain upon their nature, as being deſcended from a race of polluted, diſobedient creatures; and thereby hath begotten them again into a better ſtate, than they were in by nature, with a purpoſe to bring them by

Chriſt

Chriſt to everlaſting ſalvation, as *veſſels made unto honour*. But ſtill we know the conditions upon which he hath purpoſed to bring them thither; which are, according to our article, "that they obey his calling, and walk "religiouſly in good works." It is not, by this article, a fatal neceſſity, but a voluntary co-operation with his purpoſes, and grace, which is to bring them thither. And he hath made no veſſels abſolutely and neceſſarily predetermined to diſhonour in another life, without their own fault in this. Honoured, or diſhonoured, as the veſſel may be in this life, it can be its own moral character alone, which it ſhall carry with it, that can fix it for honour, or diſgrace in the next.

St. *Paul* himſelf ſpeaks with as much confident aſſurance of the happy ſtate of his converts, as any article of our church can do of the *predeſtinated*, or *elect*: as I obſerved in my morning's diſcourſe: *I am perſuaded*, ſaith he, *that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in* Chriſt Jeſus *our Lord*.[1] This perſuaſion in general

[1] Rom. VIII. 38, 39.

he

he was willing charitably and affectionately to entertain of them, as of himſelf. Yet he admoniſhes theſe very converts within a ſhort ſpace after, "*not to be* HIGH-MINDED, *but* FEAR; *for if God ſpared not the* NATURAL *branches:*[m] i. e. the *Jews*, who were born by natural deſcent children of covenant with him; *take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not* THEE, who art of *Gentile* birth, and as it were engrafted into covenant, in the room of thoſe branches, the *Jews* that were cut off. And of himſelf he writeth, though he was *called to be an apoſtle*,[n] according to the will of God, *ſeparated even from his mother's womb*[o] to this holy office, and afterwards called by his grace, having certainly had as great a ſhare of the divine aid, or proofs of election, as have been given to any man, yet of himſelf he ſaith, that by godly diſcipline he endeavoured to *keep under his body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt that by any means, when* he *had preached to others*, he himſelf *ſhould be a caſt-away.*[p]

Thus it is alſo, as St. *Peter* ſpeaketh, that *we* likewiſe are to *uſe* ALL DILIGENCE, *to make our* CALLING *and* ELECTION *ſure.*[q] And in this ſenſe our church, at the conclu-

[m] Rom. xi. 20, 21. [n] Rom. i. 1. [o] Gal. i. 15.
[p] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [q] 2 Pet. i. 10.

ſion

ſion of her article concerning predeſtination, ſaith, for the direction of good men, that "we muſt receive God's promiſes in ſuch "wiſe, as they be generally ſet forth to us "in holy ſcripture:" and for the general conduct of *all* chriſtians whatever, that "in "our doings that will of God is to be fol-"lowed, which we have expreſsly declared "to us in the word of God." Hence ſhe manifeſtly ſuppoſeth, that ſome voluntary conformity is required, ſomething is to be done, and that done after a certain manner, even by thoſe whom ſhe hath included under the happy denomination of "God's choſen "in *Chriſt*," in order to confirm their happineſs; and that, agreeably to what an apoſtle hath taught us, there is no other way to ſecure an eternal inheritance with *the Saints in light*, but by conformity in practice, as well as faith to the divine will. *And this*, ſaith an apoſtle, *is the will of God* concerning us, *even our ſanctification*.[r]

Thus will the article of our church, when taken upon the whole together, be found concordant with the doctrine of St. *Paul*; and the doctrine of St. *Paul* with that of *Chriſt* in his goſpel, notwithſtanding our noble

[r] 1 Theſſ. iv. 3.

author's

author's cenſure,[*] that St. *Paul* differed from his maſter in this point. They will, I ſay, taken upon the whole together, ſpeak the ſame ſentiments. For it would be very unfair to interpret a whole page, or chapter, or ſection, by a ſingle, detached ſentence in that page, or chapter, or ſection: or to judge of a whole chapter by an obſcure ſentence in it; when it would be more juſt and rational to unravel and interpret the obſcure ſentence by the tenor of the whole chapter, or epiſtle. Treat an article of religion at leaſt as fairly, as you would a chapter or ſection in any other ſenſible, rational book. Compare this with other articles. Abſolute predeſtination and good works are incompatible doctrines. For there can be no moral goodneſs in what is forced, and conſequently unavoidable. There can be no preſcription of moral rules to predeſtinated creatures: or at leaſt they would be uſeleſs. For as much as theſe creatures would be abſolutely determined beforehand as mere inſtruments, or mere engines of motion, either to *obey* them, or *not* to obey them, whether formally preſcribed or not; and then pray, where would be the uſe of the injunction?

[*] Bol. Eſſ. Vol. III. p. 174. Oct. Ed.

Our

Our church therefore, when ſhe requires our aſſent to theſe articles, either *doth* hold the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination, or ſhe doth *not*, but on the contrary doth ſuppoſe men capable of conforming voluntarily to the articles of religion. If ſhe doth hold the doctrine of predeſtination, ſhe might as well ſpare all the reſt of her articles; forafmuch as it would not be in any man's own power, either to grant, or withhold his aſſent, but in the power of the predeſtinating director. And if ſhe *doth* ſuppoſe men at liberty to conſent, or not, to theſe articles, which can only make them propoſals of any ſenſe to intelligent rational creatures, then ſhe cannot underſtand the doctrine of predeſtination in the way, in which ſome would interpret it.

But compare this article of our church with her homilies: which are full of exhortations to moral virtue and good works. Theſe exhortations would be abſurd and uſeleſs to *predeſtinated* perſons: that is, to creatures, who have no command over their actions, and are no longer free-agents. Laws might as well be enacted for beings governed by inſtinct. In ſhort, every exhortation ſuppoſes freedom of action: i. e. a freedom of exerting, or withholding exerciſe of power, in the being, which is exhorted.

The truth of the caſe then is this, which may ſerve,

Thirdly and *laſtly* for a reflexion to introduce a religious inference from what hath been ſaid upon the whole in theſe two diſcourſes. The ſupreme Being, who hath placed men here in a ſtate of trial, hath granted to all men ſufficient means of happineſs, or elſe he could not puniſh any with miſery. He may have admitted ſome out of the whole race of mankind, as he hath done even among chriſtians, to greater advantages of light and grace than others. As he hath vouchſafed a greater ſhare to proteſtants in general, than to the private members of the church of *Rome*. And even among proteſtants, ſome are bleſſed with privileges of greater natural talents and abilities, than others, with the benefits of a better, and more pious education, ſuch as thoſe of this place are particularly called to, and conſpicuouſly enjoy; with the conſequent advantages of more refined, good and virtuous ſentiments, whether ſuggeſted by the internal dictates of his ſpirit, or the intimations of their own natural reaſon, or the injunctions of holy writ, or the converſation of well-choſen companions; bleſſed with more frequent opportunities of doing good, under the ſeveral occurrences of the natural

and

and moral world about them. So, as hath been obſerved, he hath called chriſtians in general, into a *covenant* of happineſs; who are therefore in the ſtrength of eaſtern ſcripture-language, ſtiled by the apoſtle the *elect*, *predeſtinated*, or fore-ordained to enjoy theſe privileges. But in the great day of accounts, God will deal impartially with his creatures, and judge them according to the light and benefits, to which they have been admitted, and the uſe they have made of thoſe benefits. Good chriſtians therefore may rejoice in the hopes they have obtained, but are not to preſume: bad chriſtians may be juſtly terrified at their condition, but are not to deſpair.

It muſt be matter indeed of great ſatisfaction to the ſincere and good believer to conſider, that ſo long as he continues to obey the moral, and religious precepts of the goſpel, he continues to be of the number of God's favourite people, and that if he ſhould now die in this ſtate, he has well-grounded hopes, that notwithſtanding his many human infirmities, yet a merciful Redeemer *will receive his ſpirit*. So likewiſe muſt the conſcience of the ſinner frequently ſting him with remorſe, and many uneaſy reflexions, from an inward ſenſe and conſciouſneſs imprinted, that of whatever congregation he may be, whilſt he

perſiſts in a wicked life, he is not in the number of thoſe, who are in God's favour: but let him not from thence imagine, that he is by any decree abſolutely precluded from ever becoming of that number. Let him tremble at his preſent condition; but then let his terror make him ſo much the more induſtrious, and more earneſt at the throne of grace for divine aid to reſcue him out of it, by amending his conduct for the future. Let him not ſuffer either a vain curioſity, or the prevalence of his own carnal affections, or the deluſions of his ſpiritual adverſaries, or the errors of enthuſiaſtic, enſnaring teachers, to drive him into deſpair, or lift him up into preſumption: but let him immediately ſhake off his ſlavery to vice, let him *awake, and ariſe from the dead*, the death of ſin, and he hath the aſſurance of an apoſtle, that *Chriſt ſhall give him light.*

In this, and this ſenſe only, according to the language of our article, can "the godly "conſideration of predeſtination, and election "in *Chriſt*, be full of pleaſant and unſpeak-"able comfort" to any; and it can be only ſo "to godly perſons;" that is, to ſuch as can give ſome proof of the divine influences of his grace operating in them, by the general tendency of their diſpoſitions to an holy life,

life, and the regular courſe of their outward actions; ſuch as find in themſelves the powers of reaſon, religion, and good ſenſe ready to controul the ſenſual appetite; or, in the ſtile of our article, "mortifying the works of the "fleſh, and their earthly members, and lift-"ing up their minds to high and heavenly "things, and confirming their faith of eter-"nal ſalvation to be enjoyed through *Chriſt*." But then let this be the only ground of their confidence. Let them not flatter themſelves with conceited thoughts, and enthuſiaſtic pride of *ſenſible* impulſes of the ſpirit, or any other evidence of their election, which is not founded on ſcripture. For vain man ſtudies to delude himſelf; and where preſumptuous fancy is not ready at hand to flatter his conceptions, fore-boding fear oftentimes ſteps in between to terrify his mind. Hence the tenets and apprehenſions of reprobation, too far indulged, have been a dangerous precipice to deſponding wicked men.

Permit me then to conclude the whole with one obſervation; for ſcripture warrants it: that if we implore the divine grace with a ſincere heart, and humble faith; if we are ready to receive it with thankfulneſs, and make a proper uſe of it, under a due ſenſe of our own weakneſs, and infirmities, we need

not fear, but that the fountains of living water will be daily open to us, and continue to ſtream forth in never-failing currents of benign influence upon thoſe, who truly and ſincerely thirſt after righteouſneſs. For the channels of his favour can be ſtopt, or clogged only by the dregs and groſs impurities of a corrupt life. But then we muſt apply, and and wait for the divine favours, under an humble ſubmiſſion to divine inſtitutions, and, according to the meaſure of grace we have received, ſtudy to conform ourſelves to his will, if we deſire finally to obtain his promiſes.

DISCOURSE VII.

The Uſe and Authority of the Paſtoral Office, and the Rite of Inveſtiture with it, conſidered. —Preached at the Conſecration of *Charles* Lord Biſhop of *Carliſle*, *March* 21ſt, 1762.

ISAIAH XL. 11.

He ſhall feed his Flock like a Shepherd; he ſhall gather the Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his Boſom; and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with Young.

WHOEVER ſeriouſly reads over the hiſtory of this country, and traces back the miſchiefs that have ariſen from the blindneſs of ſuperſtition, or the unruly zeal of enthuſiaſm, will think himſelf happy, and

find ample reaſon to bleſs God, that he is born in an age, wherein a ſyſtem of religion is eſtabliſhed upon rational principles, and ſupported by rational means: neither inforced by the law of violence, nor carried headſtrong over law in the ſpirit of anarchy. He will eſteem the nation bleſſed, wherein true Chriſtianity ſtands ſerene, protected by the favour, and illuſtrated by the example of regal piety and virtue.

Such a retroſpect will always furniſh reaſon to the diſcreet to keep a due, and well-tempered guard againſt any ſubtle attempts of ſuperſtition induſtrious to return, or any new-introduced ſeeds of enthuſiaſm ſtudious to take root. This is the buſineſs of the true ſhepherd; watchfully to guard his flock againſt the noxious plant of any kind. And an arduous taſk it is to the general overſeer of the flock. It ſuppoſes various talents; it implies prudence of addreſs, ſagacity of diſcernment, and ardor of diligence in the application.

The words of the text, above all, direct gentleneſs. And this is no mean recommendation to our preſent eſtabliſhed church. The *ſhepherd* is a figurative expreſſion in language not uncommonly applied to governors of any kind. More peculiarly applicable is it to the

inſpector

inſpector over chriſtian knowledge. It is a figure adopted by the higheſt authority among Chriſtians. *I am the true ſhepherd, and know my ſheep, and am known of mine,*[a] ſaith the great revealer of chriſtian truth. He pointeth out at the ſame time the juſt criterion by which we are to diſcern in the ſociety the *true* ſhepherd: namely by a regular admiſſion through ſome right authority; either from manifeſt divine credentials, ſuch as he brought with him; or correſpondent to divine appointments, ſuch as he and his apoſtles left behind them.

Thus the office was guarded by him from intruſion: that his church might be a regular eſtabliſhed houſhold with proper inſpectors over it: that ſo confuſion may not rage within the gates; and therein no man know his proper department, or his proper province. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, He that entereth not in by the door,* the proper door of admiſſion into the ſheepfold, *but climbeth up ſome other way, the ſame is a thief, and a robber; but he that entereth in by the door is the ſhepherd of the ſheep. To him the porter openeth, and the ſheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own ſheep by name, and leadeth them out. And*

[a] John x. 14.

when

when he putteth forth his own ſheep, he goeth before them, and the ſheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a ſtranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of ſtrangers.[b]

All this is deſcriptive of the benefit of right admiſſion into office, of the regularity enſuing it, and the miſchiefs ariſing from illicit intruſion into ſacred functions. Theſe miſchiefs in ſociety are deſcribed by the hand of violence, or the wiles of ſeduction: by the ſtrong arm of the robber, or the pillage of the inveigling thief. But, where admiſſion is obtained by due authority, the prophet *Iſaiah* informeth us in the text, what is the proper character and conduct of the truly affectionate, tender governor: *He will feed his flock like a ſhepherd, he will gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom, and will gently lead thoſe that are with young*; or as the word is rendered in the margin of our Bible, agreeably to the *Syriac* verſion, thoſe that give ſuck; or, according to another ſenſe of the original *Hebrew* word, thoſe that have brought forth, and are of courſe employed in cheriſhing and ſuckling their young.

[b] John x. 1—6.

This

This paſſage hath uſually been looked upon as predictive of the office of the *Meſſiah*. It may alſo be conſidered as deſcriptive of their office, who are appointed to have the overſight of right inſtruction and order in the *church* of the *Meſſiah*. And theſe obſervations naturally lead our minds to ſome remarks which offer themſelves, ſuitable to the preſent ſolemnity,

1*ſt*, upon the authority implied in the character of the chriſtian ſhepherd;

2*dly*, upon the expediency of ſome viſible commiſſion, and credentials of regular admiſſion into ſacred office; and the fitneſs and wiſdom of our own form;

3*dly*, upon the qualifications, and conduct requiſite in the truly chriſtian paſtoral governor.

Firſt then we may obſerve, that ſome degree of power and authority is implied in the character of a ſhepherd. It implies authority to ſuperviſe, to regulate, and conduct. It is a power to find, and to point out the proper fields of paſture to the flock; *to call*, according to our Saviour's deſcription, *the ſheep by name* into it; to go before them in the way;

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to make them acquainted with the voice of his directions; to take heed, that they follow him into the paſtures of life.

In the exerciſe of this power over moral agents there is ſomething neceſſarily implied of a judicial nature; ever to be kept indeed ſubordinate to the civil conſtitution of a ſtate; that there may be neither confuſion in the mixed diſcipline, nor tyranny in the abſolute eccleſiaſtic power. But ſuch a weight of influence is included in the very eſſence of authority; without which it could not be exerted to any uſeful purpoſes; or indeed exerted as authority at all. The office of the ſhepherd ſuppoſes authority to watch over, to check, to curb, and to reſtrain the wandring flock, to bring back the ſheep that hath been loſt. For how great would be the confuſion in civil ſociety, how fatal the miſchief to the ſpiritual flock, if while the ſhepherd ſtood in the field, one voice were permitted to call them one way, another without any reſtraint to call them another, all ſtudious to withdraw them from their proper ſalutary paſtor!

His province then ſuppoſes ſome degree of ſocial diſcipline. Now all diſcipline is irkſome to the licentious: it is no wonder therefore that every degree of authority hath at different times been railed againſt by thoſe, who

who have fallen under its cognizance; to whom it hath been troubleſome, whether in the moſt moderate civil ſtate, or the mildeſt church-regimen. But nevertheleſs all ſociety upon earth neceſſarily ſuppoſes ſubordination: and ſubordination ſuppoſes ſuperiority ſomewhere lodged: and this ſuperiority is lodged for the ſake of ſocial diſcipline, and the maintenance of ſocial order.

Were religion indeed a thing indifferent to human beings, were it of no ſignificance to ſtates, by what tenets men were influenced, political bodies might perhaps think themſelves leſs concerned about the eſtabliſhed religion of a country. Some perhaps might be indifferent about *any* eſtabliſhment. But this is not the caſe: experience of all ages ſheweth us it is not. Where the flock is not fed with *wholeſome*, it will find out *noxious* food unto itſelf. Experience proves that the greateſt injuries to ſociety have been produced by falſe tenets of religion zealouſly propagated, and furiouſly maintained: a ſet of men without *any* principle of religion at all would be a very dangerous herd of creatures to all their fellow-beings. For, where there is no internal reſtraint of action, dreadful is the reſult of vehement overbearing paſſion. All wiſe civilized ſtates therefore have

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agreed in the ſentiment, the neceſſity of eſtabliſhing *ſome* religion, as a firſt foundation of public welfare, and cement of ſocial unity in the *public* body; and all regular eſtabliſhment ſuppoſes ſocial order.

Our Saviour therefore repreſents the collective body of profeſſors of his religion by figures of ſpeech, which denote ſociety. They are called an houſhold, a family, a kingdom, a flock over which preſides a ſhepherd, a vine and its ſhooting branches: and his apoſtle St. *Paul* denotes the church, or collective body of Chriſtians, as many emblematic writers have done political ſociety, by the body natural. But over every aſſociated body there muſt be an head; to every vine there is a root; over every houſhold there is a maſter; to every family a father; over every kingdom a prince.

Let not men therefore complain of inſtitutions, which the very condition of their own nature, and the ſupport of their own good, have made neceſſary. Exorbitant extenſion of power there *may* have been by ſome of thoſe advanced to high authority in *Chriſt*'s family, as all inſtitutions among frail, human creatures are liable to abuſe; and the corruption of the beſt makes them ſometimes the worſt. Such extenſions of power there

have

have been. Witneſs the church of *Rome*. But let not the proteſtant church of *England* be wounded through the ſides of the church of *Rome!*

For it hath been the art of writers, enemies through prejudice, ſometimes enemies upon principle, to regular inſtitutions, to aim a dart at popery, and intend, that it ſhould glance upon proteſtant ordinances: ſometimes enemies through diſguſt to a particular perſon, they have directed a ſhaft at a dignity, which in their ſerious hours they would not hurt, merely to affect a perſon, who has incautiouſly behaved with ſome appearances of pride, or arrogance in the ſtation. Appeal to their honeſt thoughts in other caſes, perhaps their own, and they would think it hard, they would feel it hard, they would call it cruel, that the order and welfare of ſociety ſhould ſuffer through the imprudent behaviour of one or two intruſted with authority.

For the expediency of *ſome* kind of paſtoral inſpection, not to intermeddle with diſputes about the antiquity and origin of any eſtabliſhed form, which would be a ſcope too large for my preſent appointment, the expediency, I may ſay, of ſome degree of regimen in the religious body, the utility of our own form,

form, and its correſpondence with other wiſe inſtitutions of ſociety, will upon the foot of reaſon vindicate its continuance in a well-regulated ſtate, for the ſpiritual as well as civil benefit of all, by means of an eſtabliſhed, well-tempered religious diſcipline over thoſe, who officiate in ſacred functions. And we may diſmiſs this head with one obſervation, that there never was any regulated conjunction of men upon earth without ſupervifing directors of ſome kind or other, whoſe injunctions had their weight. Even the moſt licentious have their leaders; popular for a day, or the creatures of an hour, raiſed by tumult and canvas, and ſoon depoſed by ſedition ſpringing naturally out of the bowels of their own faction. The beſt and happieſt ſocieties have been thoſe, where the authority hath been moſt deliberately confirmed; and whether the office hath been temporary, or for life, a regular inſtitute of ſucceſſion hath been eſtabliſhed. This leads me to the

Second point propoſed, namely the expediency of ſome viſible commiſſion, and outward proof and credentials of admiſſion into the paſtoral office, and the fitneſs and propriety of the form uſed by our own church. The great inſtitutor of the chriſtian ſociety, in his emblematic deſcription, obſerves, that

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the true ſhepherd entereth in through the door into the ſheepfold. He defineth *him*, and *him alone*, who thus entereth, to be the true ſhepherd: and ſignifieth that the ſheep will attend with ſecurity to *his* voice *alone:* becauſe *the thief who entereth in another way, cometh only to ſteal, to kill, and to deſtroy.* And again he ſaith, *I am the door*; the way of admiſſion is by *me:* the true authority of the ſhepherd is derived by commiſſion from *me: By me if any man enter in, he ſhall be ſaved, and ſhall go in, and out, and find paſture.* If any man then deſire admittance, let him allow *Chriſt* to be, what he claims in this ſenſe to be, *the door* of entrance. Let him offer himſelf in the way which is moſt conformable to the ordinance of *Chriſt*, and to venerable uſage tranſmitted through ſucceſſive ages down to the preſent days.

Modern enthuſiaſts may pretend what *internal* call they pleaſe: but it may be fairly aſked, how do they prove that call to the doubtful hearer, if they have no *external* commiſſion to preach the goſpel? For the credentials of miracles are now ceaſed. And even as to thoſe, who have received the general commiſſion of ordination into ſome degree of ſacred function in his church, *Chriſt* by his goſpel, and by his ordinances calleth

them home to their proper fold: to their proper diſtrict, whereunto they are appointed by due authority. They are, according to the tenor of his emblem, and his apoſtle St. *Paul*'s explanation of it by example, not to force or inſinuate themſelves into another's fold, wherein they would be but intruding ſtrangers. For *a ſtranger*, ſaith he, will the ſheep not naturally *follow*, without art applied to ſeduce them; *but will flee from him*; *for they know not the voice of ſtrangers*. By which figure he intimateth, that the innocent, undeluded flock will not attend, and he plainly intimateth his own ſentiments, that the flock *ought not* to attend, and *cannot* with *ſafety* attend to the alluring voice of ſuch intruders. For it immediately followeth, *the thief cometh not, but to ſteal, and to kill, and to deſtroy*, ſeducing into dangerous, or fatal error. Thoſe who pretend to fetch all their arguments from ſcripture, and to be governed only by ſcripture, ſhould, one would think, particularly conform themſelves to the expreſs rules preſcribed in holy ſcripture.

I will not here ſpeak of the prejudices that have ariſen to civil governments from raſh intruſion into ſacred offices; or how enthuſiaſm in religion hath often given the ſignal

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to ſedition in the ſtate. What was the conſequence of every man's taking upon himſelf the office of a preacher, and of leading a multitude after him, as his fancy, or ſpiritual conceit dictated to him, that he had a *call*, we have read with lamentation in the annals of our fore-fathers. It was deplored not only by the members of our church, but by ſome of the beſt regulated ſeparate ſects among us, as one of the great grievances of the civil war: till the ſpirit of the nation almoſt worn out by the miſeries it had endured, gave its laſt effort for peace and order again, and returned back to its ancient inſtitutions.

But the expediency to public welfare of ſome public commiſſion to the diſcharge of holy functions, as well as of other offices in ſociety, hath already in great meaſure been proved by way of anticipation under the foregoing head. It is the reſult of what was there remarked. And here, as I have already obſerved, is to be meant, not merely a general, vague commiſſion to exerciſe miniſterial function, wherever the perſon pleaſeth to fix his ſtand; but a deſtination, and confinement to diſtrict by proper order; that bold pretenſion may not thruſt itſelf into another's province, or vainly intermeddle with another's charge, imputing negligence, or chal-

lenging ſincerity, where it is not a judge; as hath been the mode of ſome enthuſiaſts in the preſent age; nor one man *build upon another man's foundation:* [c] that men may not be called from the honeſt labours of their profeſſion to unſeaſonable devotion; nor from peaceable union with their properly-appointed paſtors to irregular connexions with rambling aſſumers of ſuperior miſſion; nor from decent devotion in the church to tumultuary devotions in the field. Upon theſe diſorders in the flock the good diſcreet overſeer will caſt his eyes with ſorrow; watchful to prevent, or check them by all the prudent means he can.

For if the eſtabliſhment of truth upon the firmeſt baſis, eſpecially *religious* truth, as the moſt intereſting, be a matter of the higheſt importance to ſociety, becauſe men's civil conduct *will* be actuated by their religious perſuaſions, then it will follow to be requiſite, that an order of men adequately advanced in learning and piety ſhould be commiſſioned with authority to inſpect the doctrines and conduct of ſuch as profeſs themſelves teachers of revealed truth to mankind; inveſted with authority to examine the candidates for this

[c] Rom. xv. 20.

high

high office of teaching truth; with an authority to commiſſion under them the fit and qualified, and to ſend them forth with proper credentials into the world; at the ſame time to reject the unfit; to repel the bold intruder; to curb, check, and exclude the ſubtle impoſtor.

The uſefulneſs and importance of ſuch authoritative guardian-office to the cauſe of truth have been ſufficiently diſcovered by the ill-conſequences that have ariſen to ſociety, where it hath been interrupted, and its juriſdiction tumultuouſly contravened. Therefore the adverſaries of religious truth, and they who mean to puzzle and perplex truth, in order more effectually to delude, have ſo induſtriouſly and malignantly inveighed againſt this authority, and againſt thoſe who bear and exerciſe it.

But to proceed; wherever offices of high rank, and great weight of dignity have been eſtabliſhed, diſtinct ceremonials of inveſtiture with the authority have been uſed. The moſt ſolemn and ſacred have ever, in all well-regulated ſtates, been appropriated to thoſe of the greateſt importance. And ſuch ceremonials have not merely been approved in ſpeculation; but experience alſo hath confirmed their uſe: or elſe they would not have

been univerſally applied by all nations in ſome ſhape or other, varied by the temper, dignity, and conſtitution of the ſtate, to the different ranks and degrees of authority in the ſocial body. The rite of inveſtiture in ſhort is the delivery of power; it is the ſeal of commiſſion; it is the open declaration of authority conferred. And the ſolemn ceremonials uſed tend to imprint on the minds of thoſe that are to be governed a proper reſpect and veneration for the office of the ſacred guardian over ſocial order. Thus the unction of kings, and the conſecration of paſtoral governors in the church have had their beneficial uſes not only upon the minds of the people, but alſo upon the heart of the anointed, or conſecrated. It teacheth the people, *whoſe* authority they are directed to obey: it teacheth the governor, *whoſe* miniſter he is, and *whoſe* commiſſion he ſubordinately executeth. It teacheth him therefore to be more regardful of the charge of the high office, to which he is admitted, through the very ſolemnity, whereby he is inveſted with it, and the devout prayers at the ſame time offered up to God for his aſſiſtance in the diſcharge of it. Theſe ſupplications admoniſh the ſpiritual paſtor, earneſtly to purſue the grace, for which he prayeth; that he may *duly adminiſter the godly diſcipline*

diſcipline of the word: they admoniſh the people committed to his charge, whenever in holy addreſs they join with him, ſo to prepare themſelves *in godly ſimplicity of heart, that they may obediently follow the ſame.*

And if ſolemn rites of inveſtiture with *civil* offices have been admitted as uſeful to ſociety, even by ſome of thoſe [d] who had not entertained the greateſt veneration for dignities, why ſhould they be ridiculed in admittance into offices the moſt ſacred, and of the utmoſt importance to mankind? Much might be ſaid of the form of dedication to the higheſt office in the ſpiritual ſociety uſed by our own church. But time will only permit me to make one obſervation upon its uſeful propriety.

It is in every reſpect calculated to inſpire the breaſt with reſolution and holy ardor to perform faithfully all the duties of that function, to which the overſeer of the flock is called. It is not an office calculated to inflate with pride, as ſome have traduced the holy function. Unleſs this be a leſſon of pride, which is read in the epiſtle appointed for the occaſion, that to be *lifted up with pride,* is one of the diſqualifications, which render

[d] See the inauguration of Oliver Cromwell to the protectorſhip, deſcribed by Whitlock.

unworthy of the office. And unleſs our Saviour read to his diſciples a leſſon of pride, when he taught them, that *if any man would be great among them*, he ſhould be *leaſt of all, and ſervant of all.*[e] No: if any man appear proud and faſtuous in the ſtation, it is not the office, nor the rite of conſecration which makes him ſo. He brought with him his pride into it, if he behave proudly in it. For the prayers, which are offered up, the leſſon read, the charge given, excite diligence, ſpeak the language of meekneſs, humility, gentleleſs, and tenderneſs, and breathe love. *Simon Son of Jonas, loveſt thou me? feed my lambs!* let the proof of thy love towards me be thy care and tenderneſs over the new, and young converts to my goſpel. *Simon ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me? feed my ſheep!*[f] prove it by thy diligence in conducting and inſtructing my adult followers. This is one of the pathetic paſſages of *Chriſt*'s goſpel directed to be read in the office of conſecration.

Whoever ſeriouſly attends to that ſolemn office of our church, and it would be uncharitableneſs unworthy of a chriſtian to ſuſpect, that the perſon therein to be dedicated to the higheſt function in God's family is not *then*

[e] Mark x. 44.

[f] John xxi. 15, 16.

ſerious;

ſerious; whoever, I ſay, thinks upon the weighty charge then committed to him by the Lord moſt high, will perceive his mind warmly agitated to purſue the character in all its branches, drawn by the prophet *Iſaiah* in the text; *to feed his flock like a ſhepherd, to gather the lambs with his arm, to carry them in his boſom, and gently lead thoſe that are with young*. With a remark or two upon each of which branches, I ſhall beg leave, as was propoſed,

3*dly*, and laſtly, to conclude this diſcourſe. There are indeed natural humane affections of mind in ſome more than in others, tending to compleat this character. There is a natural temper of mind improved alſo by habit of action peculiarly ſuited to the delineation here given. But the attainment of ſuch qualities will ever be the object of all, who aim at the character of the true ſhepherd.

And firſt, the office of the true, ſincere overſeer of *Chriſt*'s fold, is *to feed his flock like a ſhepherd*. It is to lead them forth into the paſtures of life, to conduct them by the rivers of health, or in the language of the prophet, *to draw up water for them out of the wells of ſalvation*:[s] not to leave them

[s] Iſa. xii. 3.

ſtarving

ſtarving upon the barren ſoil, nor ſuffer them to wander unguarded near the danger of the rocky precipice. The book of God is the proper field of paſture to the chriſtian flock. For knowledge is by the prophet's figure repreſented to be to the mind, what food is to the body. But even here, in *this* field, the ſheep may not ramble ſecurely, nor gather every plant to good advantage, without a guide. *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt?* ſaid *Philip* to the eunuch. *And he ſaid, how can I, except ſome man ſhould guide me?* [h]

The church of *Rome* ſhutteth up the true field of paſture from the flock, or divideth it out to them in ſcanty portions. The book is opened in a language which they cannot underſtand. The enthuſiaſt on the other hand is often ſuffered, nay encouraged by his ſeducers to ramble in the field unreſtrained, to pick up as he pleaſes, what he meets with there, applying it at random: ſo that being left without a guide, or truſting himſelf to a deluſive guidance, he is permitted, perhaps often excited, to cull the herb that may be hurtful miſapplied, and convert that which was intended for his nouriſhment into poiſon. The field is opened to the proteſtant chriſtian

[h] Acts VIII. 31.

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of the eſtabliſhed church of this country; but then as God hath left it to human induſtry, and human means to cultivate, apply aright, and improve this paſturage, ſo is he placed under the eye of proper guardians and directors. The ſcripture indeed is intended for the full information of thy ſoul, but God hath left room for human induſtry to interpret and explain ſcripture; and therefore learned inſtructors are appointed, whoſe duty it is to perform this taſk faithfully to the unlearned.

A certain writer [i] hath endeavoured with a parade of reaſoning, but by archneſs of expreſſion, rather than by ſound reaſon, to evince, that ſcripture is ſo clear, as not to need any explanation of learned men: "That "ſcripture was not given to make work for "interpreters; nor to teach men how to "doubt, but how to live." As to the firſt poſition againſt the uſe of the clergy, in this reſpect, we may appeal to any one, who hath read the ſcriptures with a ſerious mind, whether from figurative expreſſions uſed, from ancient cuſtoms alluded to, from the peculiar idioms of languages, and the neceſſary obſcurities in dead languages, even the learned

[i] See Gordon's Independent Whig, No. 9.

do not find frequent need of cloſe ſtudy and experience to aſcertain the meaning of many paſſages. We may appeal to experience, whether the many falſe notions, *the hay and ſtubble built* upon ſuppoſed foundations of ſcripture in the darker ages of ſcience, do not prove the neceſſity of ingenuous learned labour frequently to clear and confirm the right ſenſe of ſcripture. Acquaintance with the cuſtoms and writings of antiquity will be the beſt key to open the book of ancient date: and the labour of deep reſearches into days that are far paſt is not in vain. The treaſure of the inquirer's purſuit is a moſt uſeful branch of ſcience. And the great author of our religion hath told us, *the ſcribe, that is well-inſtructed unto the kingdom of God, is like an houſholder, that bringeth forth out of his treaſures things old,* as well as *new.*[k]

The great outlines of duty may indeed, as our author urges, be clear and perceptible to all: but then it requires the judicious eye of an experienced examiner to diſcern all the ſtrokes and lineaments, which go to fill up the finiſhed portrait of the improved, and *perfect man of God.* In ſhort the divine œconomy ſeems to have been the ſame in the *re-*

[k] Matt. xiii. 52.

ligious,

ligious, as in the *moral* world. Foundations are given, and faculties are given: but much is left to the labour and induſtry of man to compleat the moral ſtructure; to improve the intellectual, as well as the corporeal ſtrength.

It is urged in the latter poſition, "That "ſcripture was not given to teach men how "to doubt, but how to live." True; ſo the light of the ſtars in the natural world was not given to teach men how to wander, or to doubt and diſpute about their path-way in the waters, as they ſail: but was given to conduct man's ſteps, and direct the courſe of his ſails in the night: yet many falſe deductions, and *doubtful* ſpeculations at the beſt have been raiſed from the courſes of the cœleſtial bodies: the induſtry, and cloſe obſervation, and ſkill of man is required to apply their light properly: to guide the traveller in the deſart, or the mariner to his deſired port: otherwiſe the one may doubt about his way and wander; or the other ſplit upon a rock. All light in ſhort is given from above, the rays of the ſun, and the beams of goſpel knowledge: they come down alike as gifts from *the father of lights:* but ſtill it is left to the diligence, and often requires the ſkill of man to apply the benefit of theſe rays and beams

beams aright, to receive their full and proper uſe.

Are there not paraphraſes upon the book of nature, upon the works and operations of God in the natural world, and his eſtabliſhed laws therein, which are acknowledged to be uſeful? Are there not comments upon theſe ſubjects, admired even by the free-thinker? Why then ſhould he object againſt comments, or rail againſt paraphraſes upon the *revealed* book of God?

It becomes then, after all, the epiſcopal paſtor to ſee, that the word of God be rightly divided to the flock; that the light be cleared of obſcurity, and ſet in its full force before the people; that neither the miſt of darkneſs reſt upon it, nor the ſpecious covering of falſe gloſſes be caſt over it to miſguide the ſimple and unwary. It is his charge to guard the ſheep againſt the rapaciouſneſs of the wolf, and preſerve the lamb from the ſubtlety of the fox. For

2dly, *He will gather the lambs*[1] *with his arm, he will carry them in his boſom.* This

[1] The original word טלאים ſignifieth young ſucking lambs. As the ſhepherd then *gathereth in his arms* the lambs, which the ewes have dropped upon the mountains, or in the bleak and wide-extended foreſt, *and carrieth them* home *in his boſom* to the fold, ſo ſhall *Chriſt* and his miniſters gather converts out of all nations, even from the uncivilized nations of the earth, and reduce them under orderly diſtricts of truſt and care.

This idea of gathering or collecting a flock out of all nations, eſpecially the remnant of the houſe of *Iſrael*, is agreeable

figure may well be referred to the caution and tenderneſs wherewith the good epiſcopal father will watch over the education of youth, or the inſtruction of new-made converts in any country. He will look upon theſe, in the language of St. *John*, as his own *little children*, his children in the ſacred family of God intruſted to him.

The firſt principles imbibed by the tender mind are of great importance to ſociety, as well as to the young inexperienced agent, and to the future man. As far therefore as the ſchools of a province are by the laws of his country placed under his guardianſhip and inſpection, he will be watchful over them,

able to that of the prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. xxxiv. which is carried through ſeveral verſes. *For thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I, even I will both ſearch my ſheep, and ſeek them out. As a ſhepherd ſeeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his ſheep that are ſcattered; ſo will I ſeek out my ſheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been ſcattered in the cloudy and dark day:* i. e. either in the day of ignorance, or the day of perſecution. *And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries.—I will feed my flock, and I will cauſe them to lie down, ſaith the Lord God. I will ſeek that which was loſt, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will ſtrengthen that which was ſick.—And I will ſet up one ſhepherd over them, and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant David*, i. e. the great repreſentative of *David*, being a deſcendant from the loins of *David*, according to the prophetic language.[m] The prophet at the end of the chapter explains the figure, and what is meant by the *flock*, ſaying expreſsly; *and ye my flock, the flock of my paſture, are men, and I am your God, ſaith the Lord God.*

m See Iſ. xi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5.—xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxvii. 24.

cautious

cautious to whom he grants a licence of teaching, or erecting any new nurſery. Such viſitation will be of the utmoſt importance to guard againſt early deception and falſhood, and the ſeed of irreligious principle. It will be a proof of his ſerious ſolicitude for the civil ſtate, as well as of affectionate tenderneſs to theſe his children, to watch parentally over their improvement, to weigh accurately the abilities, principles, and conduct of the inſtructor. Therefore

Thirdly and laſtly, in the language of the prophet, *He will gently lead them that are with young*; or according to the original ſenſe of the word, and ancient verſions, thoſe that have brought forth, and ſuckle their young.[n]

[n] Thus the *Syriac* verſion renders it *lactantes leniter ducet.* The original word עלות in the full extent of its meaning may imply thoſe that are ſpent with labour in bringing forth their young: this idea is agreeable to the full ſcope of one of the ancient verſions, *fœtas ipſe portabit.* And this ſame image and picture of care in the ſhepherd over the ewes that have juſt yeaned, together with their weak, tender young, whom the dam hath dropt in any unfavourable ſituation, is not diſſimilarly drawn in the following lines by the Roman poet.

——Hanc vix, Tityre, duco:
Hîc inter denſas corylos modó namque gemellos,
Spem gregis, ah! ſilice in nudâ connixa reliquit.

See the ſame image of care, Gen. xxxiii. 13. where the word עלות is by ſome interpreted *de prægnantibus* But the *Chaldee* paraphraſe and *Arabic* verſion have it *oves et boves lactantes.* And 1 Sam. vi. 7. it is uſed for thoſe that have *brought forth*, and muſt be ſo interpreted: *Now therefore take a new*

This figure implies all that gentleneſs and prudence of addreſs, wherewith the inſtructors of youth and new-made converts are to be governed and conducted.

For in which ever ſenſe we underſtand the original word, whether of them that are big with young, or of them that have brought forth, and by inſtinct of nature cheriſh and ſuckle their young, for the word may be underſtood in both theſe ſenſes, the emblem will have nearly the ſame force. In the one ſenſe it will imply thoſe, who in the infant-ſtate of the church were ſucceſsfully engaged in making converts, or thoſe who to this day are ſo employed in uncivilized countries, and are thus daily bringing forth children unto Chriſt; in the other it will very properly denote them, who in the maturer ſtate of the church were earneſtly ſolicitous in the buſineſs of inſtructing converts already made, or in educating chriſtian children, or improving the adult chriſtian. In either ſenſe it comprehends a parental care in the epiſcopal

a new cart, and take two milch kine עלות *on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them.* In which paſſage the Septuagint tranſlate the word עלות πρωτοτοκους, *primum enixas*, thoſe that have *brought forth their firſt young*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* verſions and Targ. Jonath. tranſlate *duas boves*, or *duas vaccas, lactantes*.

guardian over public inſtructors: that the diſciple may be fed with *the ſincere milk of the word* of truth.* And this is an ample and arduous taſk for the ſerious paſtor. It becomes not me, neither would time permit me to enlarge more upon this office in this place, before them that know, and execute it better, than any words or ſentiments of mine can pretend to direct. I have treſpaſſed upon your patience too long already.

What remains, but the oblation of our hearty and daily prayers to God, that his flock may never want true and tender paſtors, equal in ability and fidelity to thoſe that have gone before them in the wiſe appointments of his providence? May every member of the ſacred community, through his grace and aſſiſtance, *by whoſe ſpirit the whole body of the church is governed and ſanctified, attend truly and painfully to his vocation and miniſtry*; conſidering that he is accountable for his own, and not for another's office! According to the province aſſigned him for the good of his brethren, and therein his own, *whether miniſtry, may he wait on his miniſtring; or he that teacheth on teaching; or he that exhorteth on exhortation: he that*

* 1 Peter ii. 2.

diſtributeth,

diſtributeth, may he do it with ſimplicity; he that ruleth with diligence: [p] that ſo our church may continue a regular, *ſpiritual houſe* built up unto God; and that the miniſters in this houſe may be together *an holy prieſthood, to offer up ghoſtly ſacrifices acceptable unto Him through Jeſus Chriſt;* [q] *that when the chief ſhepherd* of all *ſhall appear, they may receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away!* [r]

[p] Rom. xii. 7, 8.
[q] 1 Peter ii. 5.
[r] 1 Peter v. 4.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Motives of Munificence to the diſtreſſed Children of the Clergy.—Preached at the Anniverſary Meeting of the Sons of the Clergy, in the Cathedral Church of St. *Paul*, *May* 16, 1771.

2 Cor. VIII. 3.

For to their Power, I bear Record, yea, and beyond their Power, they were willing of themſelves.

WE are met together this day in ſupport of a moſt equitable and laudable charity; which comes recommended to us by the approbation of years. This is properly a feſtival of love; an aſſembly met together to join in praiſe of their univerſal

Creator and Benefactor; and afterwards to prove their gratitude by diſpenſing his bounties as faithful ſtewards among his creatures, the children of thoſe who have preached his laws. That the ſatisfaction herein might be heightened, the affections animated, and the countenance of charity cheared and enlivened, it was fitting, that this feaſt of love ſhould be united with the voice of harmony.

A parallel drawn between the ſtate and diſpoſition of chriſtians in the ancient church of *Macedonia*, and the parents of thoſe, in whoſe behalf this ſolemnity is inſtituted, may afford ſome motives to the exertion of love in their favour. Theſe are naturally ſuggeſted by the text, in connexion with the adjoining verſes. Arguments, which St. *Paul* made uſe of to excite an emulation in charity among his converts, the *Corinthians*, flouriſhing in a city of commerce and opulence; that they might not in benevolence, and the exerciſes of love, fall ſhort of their poorer brethren in *Macedonia*.

" Moreover, brethren," ſaith he, " we do " you to wit," or we give you to underſtand, the exceeding great, and very charitable contribution which is made in the churches of *Macedonia*, being ſuch as muſt denote an abundant ſhare of the grace of God exciting them:

them: "how that under a great trial of af-
"fliction, and of poverty, under which they
"labour, they have notwithſtanding, with
"great chearfulneſs and joy of heart, made
"an ample collection towards the relief of
"their poor brethren in *Judea:* ſo that their
"poverty hath abounded to the riches of
"their liberality:" i. e. the contribution raiſed out of the penury of their circumſtances hath demonſtrated the riches of generoſity exiſting in their hearts; their benevolence having furniſhed a gift even more than adequate to their eſtate: for to their abilities, I bear them record, yea, and beyond their abilities, unſolicited by us, they were ready of themſelves. So far from being intreated by us, they were ſpontaneous on the other hand, "praying us with much intreaty, that we "would receive the gift," and take the charge of conveying and diſtributing their beneficence. And herein they exceeded even our hope: for conſidering the diſtreſſes they had to ſtruggle with, we could not have expected ſo large a benefaction from them. But they firſt dedicated themſelves and their abilities to the Lord and his ſervice; and then the contributions they had raiſed, to our diſpoſal; according to the good pleaſure of his will, and as his wiſdom ſhould direct.

The ſame apoſtle bears honourable teſtimony to the liberality of the chriſtians of *Macedonia* in more places than one. Thus their contribution to the poor ſaints at *Jeruſalem*, is mentioned in his epiſtle to the *Romans*;[a] and their generous ſupply to himſelf, in this ſecond epiſtle to the *Corinthians*: *that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia ſupplied.*[b]

The force of the apoſtle's argument may be applied in different views; and incitements to emulation be drawn from thence by ſimilarity of reaſoning; whether we conſider,

Firſt, The ſtate and condition of the beneficent, to whom the teſtimony is born; or

Secondly, The ſituation of the perſons, to whom the addreſs is made; or

Thirdly, The merits of compaſſion in the reſpective objects; or,

Fourthly and laſtly, The gratitude we owe to the ſupreme Benefactor, the univerſal Parent, and our adopting Father in *Chriſt Jeſus*, whether as chriſtians, or as proteſtants.

[a] Rom. xv. 26. [b] 2 Cor. xi. 9.

The

The laſt of theſe arguments will excite us to join in the repeated voice of praiſe to him for the illumination of his goſpel, and a ſubſequent reformation from error. We ſhould certainly join our hands alſo in acts of gratitude, and demonſtrations of love, in beneficence to his creatures: for there can be no gratitude to God without benignity and charity to man. *He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God, whom he hath not ſeen?*[c]

The apoſtle's exhortation to the *Corinthians* was, that they would not fall behind them of *Macedonia*.

Firſt then with reſpect to the pattern ſet before you, my brethren, in the text; were the chriſtians of *Macedonia* poor? So were the parents of theſe helpleſs children, for whom your charity is ſolicited this day. Were they converts to Chriſt? The parents of theſe have been ſomething more. They have been miniſters of Chriſt, to convert and reform others: nay, ſome of them may ſtill be preachers of the goſpel of Chriſt. Did thoſe ancient chriſtians, in the midſt of their

[c] 1 John iv. 20.

poverty,

poverty, find room for liberality? The parents of ſome of theſe have grown poor by their liberality; ſometimes perhaps by ſuperabundant hoſpitality: chuſing to offend rather on the ſide of exceſs, than of defect in generoſity, and heart-felt joy of beneficence. For I may bear them record, that according to their power, yea, and beyond their power, to every act of bounty they have been chearfully diſpoſed of themſelves: ready upon every occaſion, both by ſpeech and hand, not only to promote, but ſpontaneouſly propoſe ſubſcriptions to the relief of their chriſtian brethren under any tribulation: warmed with a friendly zeal to every humane, beneficent purpoſe; to every good office towards mankind in general. Witneſs the conſtant attendance of many in this houſe, upon theſe public days of kindneſs, whom we may remember in no very ample circumſtances; who are now removed from your ſight in the Lord, we truſt, in better regions. Let us have an eye of regard to the deſolate houſe, if any of their children ſhall be found therein in want of that bread back again, which the kind parent ſo freely gave. For ſuch poverty, preceded at leaſt, if not occaſioned in part by ſuch liberality, lays a kind of claim to

compaſſion

compaſſion in behalf of her children, at the bar of every generous heart.

For, Secondly, Let us conſider the circumſtances of the perſons, to whom the apoſtle's addreſs was made: and here we ſhall find them bearing, in ſome reſpects, a near analogy to our own. For were they ſettled in a large, opulent, commercial city? So are the greateſt part of you, my brethren; in a city far more opulent, and of more extenſive commerce than that of *Corinth*. Give proof of your abundance! Give ſomething of your affluence; that God may bleſs your purſuits, and crown the remainder of your ſubſtance with proſperity! For the parents of ſome of theſe have prayed for it. Spare ſomething at leaſt from luxury, to be beſtowed in charity on the children of thoſe, who have prayed for you, and for their country's welfare! Let not the poverty of the *Macedonians* put to ſhame the treaſures of this great city!

The church of *Rome* hath of old been magnificent in her largeſſes of bounty to her clergy, even to an abſurdity, and the prejudice of the public. Let it not be the diſgrace of *Proteſtants* to fall ſhort of *Romaniſts* in a caſe of commiſeration ſo truly deplorable,

able, in a matter of charity ſo highly equitable, as the preſent.

For, Thirdly, The objects, in whoſe behalf we plead, are moſt deſerving of your benign regard. They are the children of thoſe, who have laboured in the vineyard of our common Lord and Saviour; whoſe time hath been employed in turning many to righteouſneſs, and confirming many in the way of happineſs. They *gave themſelves to the Lord*[d] and his ſervice; their hours and faculties have been exhauſted in the duties of their vocation; they have gone about in the reſpective charges of their miniſtry upon earth doing good: compaſſion at leaſt is due to their fatherleſs race; and ſo far *their debtors we are.*

They are the children of thoſe, who by their ſacred profeſſion were inhibited from following any lucrative employment: whoſe original patrimony was not improbably exhauſted in their education for the ſacred offices of their miniſtry: an education in theſe days become expenſive. And conſider how ſmall oftentimes the return; how ſmall the proviſion for the greateſt part of the clergy

[d] 2 Cor. viii. 5.

of

of this kingdom! An unhappy error at the beginning of the reformation! But ſuch is the caſe; and very piteous it is; and ſuch as requires our generous commiſeration and redreſs. What was not then foreſeen in the law of government, remains now to be ſupplied by the law of kindneſs.

Conſider the orphan left by his parent, who was once his guide! Heretofore a ſalutary guide to others; but now, alas, no longer a guide to him! to him, who was the neareſt and deareſt object of his domeſtic care! Conſider the widow deſolate, deprived of her ſoul's delight, and deſtitute of the hand, from whence her ſuccour came!

In ſome caſes charity may be liable to impoſition; but from the objects here petitioning, or rather humbly accepting your voluntary relief, there can be no ſuſpicion of fraud; no jealouſy of deception, nor any demerit in them: untainted innocence ſhutteth out fraud. Whatever the cauſe of their indigence may have been, theſe babes are harmleſs. Some of them born perhaps with a fair proſpect of liberal education, in a degree of affluence: that education begun; and perhaps more than half perfected. But the root and the ſtem that nouriſhed them received

ceived a ſudden blight, and all the branches drooped.

If any ſhould ſuggeſt in ſome caſe an ill-natured ſuſpicion, that the parent in time of health was too profuſe; *yet theſe lambs, what have they done?* To urge a particular inſtance of imprudence in domeſtic œconomy againſt a general good inſtitution, would be, if not hard-hearted, at leaſt very uncandid. The detriment of the indiſcretion was to himſelf, and his own family: the generoſity of heart was to the world around him: though ſmall the ſphere to which it could be extended. Forgive him this error! Perhaps from the nature of his ſituation it was not eaſy to be avoided. For conſider the ſtate and circumſtances of the clergy of this country! Situated many of them in large towns, with a ſmall pittance of ſtipend; and an heavy burden of duty upon their hands: the common neceſſaries of life advancing haſtily in price, without any proportionate advance to their income. Where the poor are numerous; every one looking up to them, and aſking of them an example of bounty; commanding their eye, and melting their heart: many ready to upbraid them with uncharitableneſs, if they do not even exceed their capacity in giving. A kind of dignity of character at the ſame time in their houſhold

houſhold to be kept up. I do not here mean to warrant, or to plead for profuſeneſs. God knows, in too many caſes there is little room for profuſion! But in ſome caſes and ſituations it may be difficult, I ſay, to draw the line. For in every rank they are expected to live according to their profeſſion and promotion; to maintain a reſpect and reverence in their neighbourhood; to ſupport a degree of hoſpitality; to ſet an example of liberality; even where they can very ill afford it, and are ſcanty even in the common requiſites of life.

Think at the ſame time of the tender mother of a large family at home; whoſe all dependeth upon the ſlender thread of her huſband's life; anxious for her circle of innocent babes around her, that hang upon her knees for bread; and for the child that ſucketh at her breaſt. Lo! by turns ſhe *holdeth her hand to the diſtaff*,[e] to work clothing for her children; though born perhaps to an eaſier proſpect. Her labour ceaſeth not when the night cometh: *her candle goeth not out by night: yea, ſhe riſeth while it is yet night, to provide meat for her houſhold.*[f] The father beholdeth their want, and partaketh in her

[e] Prov. xxxi. 19. [f] V. 15.

moan:

moan: he knoweth the precariouſneſs of his own life, and its importance to them: yea he feeleth perhaps within himſelf the premature declines of nature; and hath inward forebodings of deſolation haſtily approaching in his houſe. He is taken from them: what he apprehended, cometh to paſs: their indigence is confirmed: yea, it falleth heavily upon them. Inſtances of this kind there have been: inſtances have been known. Verily it is hard upon the ſons of *Levi*, if neither by endowment, patrimony, nor by charity, there ſhould be *any part or inheritance found for him among his brethren!*

The ſentiments of gratitude inſpired by the united praiſes of divine bounty, and enlivened by the breath of harmony, interfere fourthly and laſtly, this day in their behalf, to prevent ſuch neglect, and to warm every generous breaſt. For that muſt be callouſly hardened indeed, which can never open itſelf to the claims of gratitude, to any feelings of compaſſion, or the powers of ſympathetic harmony.

For the voice of muſic is the voice of nature; intended, as improved, to communicate our joys; to expreſs our griefs; to pour forth all our complaints; to procure redreſs

to

to our ſorrows. Thus is it the voice of rejoicing, and the voice of mourning; the voice of ſupplication, and the voice of thankſgiving.

She can adapt herſelf to all conditions of life, and to all affections of the human ſoul. With the victorious ſhe can triumph, and with the vanquiſhed implore mercy. She can be great among the ſons of pride; and with the lowly ſhe is humble and meek. She can *rejoice with them that do rejoice; and weep with them that weep.*[g] She can *go to the houſe of feaſting, or the houſe of mourning*; and render herſelf an acceptable companion in either: becauſe ſhe can be aſſiſtant in either; to enhance pleaſure, or alleviate woe.

She is hereby calculated to promote mutual communications of good; to delight the humane in the diſpenſations of public bounty; to warm the cooler ſpirit; to urge forwards the gentler; to ſoften the harder ſoul into kindneſs; and while ſhe charms the ear, to inſinuate, or force her way into the receſſes and treaſures of the heart.[h]

Thus is ſhe fitted to join with chriſtianity in her firſt law promulgated, that of univerſal humanity; which is the law of kindneſs;

[g] Rom. xii. 15.

[h] See more upon this ſubject in a ſermon by the ſame author before the three choirs of *Glouceſter*, *Worceſter*, and *Hereford*, in the year 1753.

which is *peace on earth, and good-will among men.* [i]

And for the ſame reaſon hath ſhe been applied in religious ſervices; to exalt our admiration of divine excellencies, in order to exalt our praiſes; to humble man, in order that he may more effectually implore divine mercy; to magnify divine goodneſs, in order to increaſe our gratitude; to celebrate divine juſtice, in order to create a religious awe of the divine inſpection. In pious ſymphony with the holy Pſalmiſt *will I rejoice, O Lord, in giving thanks for the operations of thine hands, when my mouth praiſeth thee with joyful lips.* And in the plaintive notes of another inſpired hymn, *when my heart is in heavineſs I will complain: yea, unto God will I make my ſupplication: to the God of all mercy and of all comfort.* [k]

The voice of nature, in ſhort, is the voice inſpired by the God of nature to communicate our ſenſations. It is thus intended in the animal world. As it is alſo ordained, and adapted in the moral, to plead for innocence; aſſiſted by internal emotions of compaſſion; by the *yearnings of the bowels*, and tender feelings of the heart, and interceſſions

[i] Luke ii. 14. [k] Pſal. lxiii. 6. lxxxvii. 3.

of

of the ſpirit in *groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Gratitude at the ſame time is urged as a motive to munificence by our bleſſed Lord himſelf. *Freely ye have received,* ſaith he, *freely give.*[1] As indebted for all that ye enjoy to the God of bounty, be ye alſo munificent in your diſpoſal of his bleſſings to your fellow-creatures!

And let not thoſe, whoſe ſacred province it hath been by divine appointment to bleſs his people, be permitted to go out of life without any proſpect of temporal bleſſing upon their children! As they have been to you ſpiritual parents in the Lord, ſo be ye to their children in return foſter-parents upon earth! And let not the ſon of the prophet periſh for want of a morſel of bread at thine hand!

Other channels of charity indeed of late years have ariſen among us, which are not without their reſpective merit. And the fountain may not be ſufficient for an ample and adequate ſupply of them all. But permit not this to be dried up, or deprived of its ſalutary ſtream; which was the firſt inſtitution of the kind, and as it were the parent of them all!

[1] Matth. x. 8.

The chearfulneſs of the donor will add a merit to the gift: the proportion of the bounty will give a proportion to the reward. It was the praiſe of the *Macedonians*, that they were willing of themſelves. The rule of acceptable giving is, that *nothing be done grudgingly as of neceſſity; for God loveth the chearful giver*. The meaſure of the reward is, *he that ſoweth plenteouſly, ſhall reap alſo plenteouſly*.[m] And the proportion is meaſured by the ability of the giver. The poor widow, who threw in her two mites, contributed more, ſaith our Lord, *than they all who had caſt into the treaſury*. Verily that which hath been done by ſome of the miniſters of Chriſt upon ſuch occaſions as the preſent, almoſt ſimilar to this of the widow, that which hath been done by ſome whoſe children afterwards have ſtood in need of relief from this inſtitution, *may be told for a memorial of them*.

But I am perſuaded, I need ſay no more. For the praiſe of the *Macedonians*, my brethren, is already yours. The readineſs wherewith, previous to intreaty, you have convened together, ſeems to afford conſpicuous proof of this. Your plentiful contribution will, I may venture to promiſe, confirm the

[m] 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

bene-

benevolence of your intention. So that were St: *Paul* now writing, he might ſay of you, as he ſaid of them, *I bear them record, that they were willing of themſelves.* And your zeal herein will provoke many to the ſame generoſity of love.

Such competitions in goodneſs, and rival-ſhip in bounty, will be honourable among men; praiſe-worthy among ſuperior intelligences, whoever of them may be ſpectators of the conduct of this ſublunary world; but principally, and above all, will be acceptable in the ſight of God, the ſupreme inſpector of human actions, the judge and rewarder of all.

One happineſs we have; that defect in liberality to the neceſſitous is not one of the vices to be charged upon this age and country. And need enough have we indeed of that charity, *which ſhall cover the multitude of ſins.* Let not us of this aſſembly come behind our brethren in ſupporting the national character of beneficence!

May this day not be diſappointed of its hope! May it bear ample teſtimony to the ſincerity of your love! And to uſe the apoſtle's language, confirm the ground of *our boaſting on your behalf!* May the harmony of notes which entertain your ears this day, di-

late and fill the ſoul with moral harmony! May you ſtudy to imitate the goodneſs which in your choral hymns you praiſe! And ſo may we all join with one heart, and with one voice, in holy concert together with the joy of the widow and the orphan, that are relieved by you this day, in thankſgiving to God *for his unſpeakable bounty!* Amen!

DISCOURSE IX.

The public and mutual Benefit of communicating Chriſtian Inſtruction.—Preached before the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, *May* 10th, 1781.

PROV. XI. 25.

And he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.

THE communications of knowledge to the uninſtructed mind are, in the eaſtern ſtile of metaphor, reſembled to brooks of water drawn into a thirſty land, or the dew of heaven falling down upon it. The figure is natural and expreſſive: for inſtruction is grateful to the ſoul, inquiſitive after truth and wiſe counſel, as the living ſtream is re-

freſhing to the parched ſoil. The ſpirit thirſting after knowledge, in purſuit of happineſs, will be revived from the fountains of underſtanding opened to it; and the intellectual ſoul animated in its progreſs towards perfection in moral refinement and chriſtian virtue.

And bleſſed is he that conveyeth wiſdom unto the ſimple! He enricheth himſelf, whilſt he improveth others in underſtanding. *The waters drawn out of the fountains of ſalvation,*[a] according to the prophet's ſtile, will leave a part of their treaſure in the boſom of the channel through which they are conveyed. The mind, by its communications of knowledge, grows daily more improved, and confirmed in its own principles; and proceedeth from ſtrength to ſtrength in intellect, defining and comprehending them better, through the ſubjects which it contemplates, and through the means which it maketh uſe of, to inſtil the elements of Chriſtian ſcience pure and undefiled into the hearts of its diſciples. Thus *to him that hath,* and *improveth his talent, ſhall be given,*[b] ſaith the great Author of our religion; and the portion of his faculties, as a natural reward, will be augmented.

[a] Iſai. xii. 3. [b] Matth. xxv. 29.

Our

Our Lord ſpeaketh of the knowledge revealed to the world through his goſpel, under the idea of *living* water, or of water that ſpringeth up and nouriſheth unto everlaſting life. *Jeſus* ſaith unto the woman of *Samaria*, *If thou kneweſt the gift of God* to mankind in my diſpenſation and miſſion, *and who it is that ſaith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have aſked of him, and he would have given thee living water. Whoſoever drinketh of this water*, of the water which I now aſk of thee, whoever contenteth himſelf with the temporary gratification of his mere bodily appetites, ſhall thirſt again. He will find thoſe appetites of his corporeal nature returning again upon him. *But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt: but the water that I ſhall give him ſhall be a well of water*, a never-failing fountain, ſpringing up, and exalting to eternal life; where he ſhall not be pained with the returns of bodily wants and appetites any more. If we knew and valued our ſupreme intereſt aright, we ſhould anſwer with this woman, *Sir, give me this water, that I thirſt not, neither come* again *hither to draw*;[c] thy doctrine is ſufficient to all the purpoſes of ſpiritual animation, and life eternal.

[c] John IV. 10—15.

The

The eager deſire of the ſoul after divine contemplation, and admiſſion into the favourable preſence of God in his temple, is, in the language of the Pſalmiſt, expreſſed by one of the keeneſt ſenſations and impulſes of the human appetites, that of thirſt. *My ſoul is* athirſt *for God, yea, even for the living God: when ſhall I come to appear before the preſence of God?*[d] So the gratification of that deſire might be well expreſſed by water; and a free continued acquaintance with the divine nature and attributes, and fuller inſtruction in the divine will, by *living* water.

An illuſtration of the text may poſſibly be derived, from alluſion to an ancient cuſtom in thoſe countries, where they had little or no rain, and where natural rivers did not abound, of drawing canals, or rills of water through their lands, from whence their grounds and gardens were watered. And he that drew water through his neighbour's land, watered therewith his own. Their water was raiſed from the lower to the higher lands, by means of pipes and forcing engines, which they put in motion, and worked with their feet. Hence probably the expreſſion in the book of *Deuteronomy*, of watering the land

[d] Pſ. XLII. 2.

with

with their *foot*.[e] This, no doubt, was a laborious taſk, as appears from the privilege of being delivered from it: for this deliverance is enumerated among the bleſſings of *Canaan*, and of obedience in that land to the voice of the Lord their God. *For the land, whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſs it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out; where thou ſowedſt thy ſeed, and wateredſt it with thy* foot, *as a garden of herbs: but the land, whither ye go to poſſeſs it, is a land of hills and vallies, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.*[f]

But whether the water deſcended from above, or through the channels of the earth, the deſign of the metaphor was ſtill the ſame, to illuſtrate the reward of liberality and public munificence. Thus in the current of waters an eddy is oft obſerved, which, in its circulating courſe, brings round the floating ſubſtance again to the place from whence it ſet out.

[e] Deut. xi. 10.

[f] This cuſtom of raiſing water, and of filling canals and aqueducts therewith, and ſo watering their fields and gardens by means of engines, which they work with their feet, prevails in ſome of the eaſtern countries unto this day; as I have been informed by a very worthy and ingenious friend, who reſided ſome time in thoſe parts, and was curious in his obſervations upon culture.

But

But it muſt here be further obſerved, that the *Chaldee* paraphraſe on the text is, "He "that *teacheth* ſhall be *taught*, or *inſtructed* "alſo himſelf." This interpretation is not foreign from the original.[s] The ſenſe conveyed is the ſame in both. The only difference is, that according to one conſtruction it is literal, in the other it is metaphorical. Both expreſs the reciprocal benefits ariſing from the communications of knowledge.

The text thus explained, with the obſervations made upon it, leads us to the following heads of conſideration, reſpecting,

Firſt, the duty,

Secondly, the modes, and moſt effectual means,

[s] Vid. Pagninum, qui Hieron. et R. David citat in hunc locum de voce יורא, ſub radice ירה, *jecit, projecit, docuit*, &c. hoc verbum poteſt dici, (inquit Pagninus) *ſignificare generaliter jacere, vel lapidem, vel ſagittam, vel rem quamcunque aliam, vel etiam pluviam, et tum affinitatem habet cum* רוה *quod eſt rigare; item doctrinam metaphoricè; quod eſt docere; eſt enim metaphora à guttis pluviæ ducta, quarum more doctrina homines alioqui inſcios inſtruit, et fæcundat, ut illæ terram.* Videtur autem hic א loco ה poni; ſicut in Hebræis Bibliis non inuſitatum. In quibuſdam etiam exemplaribus ſcriptum eſt יורה, ut inter varias eruditiſſimi Kennicotti leſtiones videre licet. Conſule etiam Guarini Lexicon ſub eâdem radice. In eodem ſenſu vox יורה redditur in verſione noſtrâ Anglicanâ, Hoſ. x. 12. donec veniat, et *pluat* vobis juſtitiam, quod alii reddunt, et *doceat* vos juſtitiam.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the reward and mutual benefits of communicating ſcience, eſpecially religious inſtruction, to mankind.

Firſt, If we conſider the duty by the law of nature, the man, who ſhews to the wandering traveller his way, does no more than light, as it were, his neighbour's torch by his own. This is nothing more than an act incumbent upon common humanity, to which the ordinary feelings of a ſocial being, impreſſed by nature, that is, by the God of nature, urge us all. For there are certain acts of tributary kindneſs due from ſocial beings connected to each other, and made reſpectively ſubordinate by the very frame of their conſtitution; acts of communicative goodneſs, eſſential to their mutual accommodation and guidance through the paths of this lower world. For *if the blind lead the blind, they would both fall into the pit of deſtruction together*.

Communication of thoughts, of mutual counſel, and deſigns of action, was one original intent and main uſe of ſpeech: and ſo language becomes one common bond and cement of ſociety, and mutual connexion of men amongſt each other. This it is, ſaith the great *Roman* philoſopher, that by means of

of mutually converſing, teaching and learning, debating and judging, conciliates the ſeveral members of the moral creation to each other, and collects and joins them in civil union. Thus are the ſeveral parts of the rational world deſigned to be conducive to the cultivation and improvement of each other; as every branch of the whole creation is made ſubſervient to the good order of the univerſal ſyſtem; to the happineſs therein of the intellectual part; and, above all, to the glory of the great Creator.

What now ſaith the law of *Chriſt*, which is a reinforcement of the law of nature, by authority more eminent, by expreſs revelation from above? We are all eſteemed by this law accountable, as rational agents, for the application of the ſeveral talents intruſted to each of us, for the common benefit of the moral ſyſtem. One of which is the light of knowledge. *Do men*, ſaith the divine Legiſlator, *light a candle to place it under a veſſel to be hid; and not rather ſet it on a candleſtick, that all who are in the houſe*, that great houſhold the world, *may ſee the light?*

Nature dictates, in the voice of common reaſon and morality, the propriety, fitneſs, and humanity of delineating good rules of life, and diſplaying good examples of virtue

to

to the world. True philoſophy, as far as it was able, collected and promulgated ſuch precepts to the *Gentiles*. Chriſtianity came, and both approved and confirmed the dictate. *Let your light*, your light of Chriſtian knowledge, ſaith the Author of our religion, *ſo ſhine before men*, not indeed ſo as to be gazed at merely for oſtentation-ſake; but that your fellow-beings may be led thereby to virtue, and *ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.*[h]

A light, ſaith he, *that is ſet on a hill, cannot be hid.* Chriſtians were ſelected out of the race of mankind to exhibit that light. Your light of chriſtian morals is to be lifted up, as a beacon ſet on a hill, to guide the inexperienced mariner in his courſe. It will thus be a public benefit, iſſuing from an improvement of the human underſtanding; a bleſſing diffuſed over the human race; and ſhining forth, in the moral refinement of intellectual creatures on their progreſs towards perfection; and conſequently will be an addition to that tribute of glory, which is for ever due to the univerſal Creator.

The firſt head then requires no further proof, either from nature or revelation, from

[h] Matth. v. 14—16.

reaſon,

reaſon, or the goſpel of the ever-bleſſed *Jeſus*. The common impulſes of humanity, as well as the precepts of Chriſtianity, ſupport it. Proceed we therefore to enquire,

Secondly, Into the modes, the beſt approved and moſt effectual means of diſtributing our bounty towards the diſpenſation of this grace of knowledge, the diffuſion of this light by the goſpel; and of making the beſt improvement thereof, by implanting and cultivating it in the hearts of our fellow-creatures.

Among theſe, the early education of children in chriſtian principles, muſt, in the firſt place, ſtrike every ſerious humane breaſt among us. Accordingly we find this, in the original meetings of this ſociety, to have been the firſt object of their beneficence. The inſtitution commenced in this truly laudable deſign, the promotion of a right plan for the religious education of the children of the poor, the child of the widow, and the helpleſs orphan, the child of the careleſs and vicious parent, and for the preſervation of the deſtitute in the paths of honeſty.

Great, it is to be hoped, is the number of thoſe, whom this parental care hath ſaved; reſcuing many out of the ſtreets and lanes of corruption,

corruption, where ſimplicity and innocence would ſoon have been tainted, and the fountains of life poiſoned; ſaying to the indigent, in the welcome invitation of the prophet, *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, come, and drink of the waters of life; come, buy* learning and knowledge, without money, and without price. *Incline your ear to inſtruction*, ſaith Wiſdom in this your inſtitution; *hear, and your ſoul ſhall live!*

Now the value of the bounty contributed to any beneficent purpoſe, is to be eſtimated by the value of the intereſt concerned. As the ſoul then is ſuperior to the body, the intereſt of the former having ſo much the preeminence over the latter, the proviſion made for its improvement and welfare muſt be proportionably the more important.

The right education of children hath, by ſome ancient nations, been deemed of ſuch conſequence, as to have been made a matter of public ſtatute. They took them, by law of the ſtate, out of the hands of their parents, and ſubjected them to public diſcipline and inſtitution. Happy would it be for this country, if parents would be more careful within their own walls, than they uſually

[i] Iſa. LV. 1—3.

are, to keep a guard over the early morals and religious principles of their children, and domeſtics!

For we may, in reality, aſcribe much of the lewdneſs and intemperance of growing youth, and maturer manhood, much of the licentiouſneſs and profligacy of the preſent times, to a want of proper ſeed of diſcretion ſown in due ſeaſon, of ſound moral and religious principles, of diſtinction between good and evil to be implanted in tender minds, to bind the conſcience; and of regular diſcipline and controul over the years of childhood.

It is *your* praiſe, my brethren, united in this ſociety of parental love, that as far as your ability and extent of inſpection reacheth, you ſo far endeavour to correct and remedy this evil.

I might here ſpeak of the danger of leaving children and young perſons to pick up principles and opinions for themſelves, as the wind ſhall ſcatter them over the face of the earth; where they may ſuck in poiſon inſtead of food; and meet the venom of aſps, while they ſeek for grateful nouriſhment. For the ſerpent lurketh, and never more ſucceſsfully, than in the flowery paths of youth, where he biteth moſt fatally in the way of pleaſure.

But

But the perils of neglecting childhood, and the advantages arising from the right inſtitution of youth, have been ſo fully delineated by much abler hands in this place, that I ſhall not attempt to add any thing further upon this branch of your eſtabliſhment; nor can I aim to improve upon the plan of culture in general laid down by them. It is ſufficient juſt to hint to minds like yours the uſefulneſs of the inſtitution to the objects of your care, and the benefits naturally reſulting from thence to the public. For I am now called to a ſecond branch of your piety, which is the confirmation of thoſe in ſound religion and morals, whoſe tender minds your guardianſhip hath formed to early virtue. For this purpoſe, you have wiſely and liberally, in proportion to your ability, provided, in the diſperſion of ſolid, plain, and eaſy tracts of piety and morality among your lower brethren; eſpecially, and above all, the book of life. Such uſeful treatiſes many young perſons, in the ſtraitneſs of their circumſtances, might not have been well able to purchaſe at their full price: many through their thoughtleſs levity might not have been inclined to purchaſe them. But when ſuch books are gratuitouſly put into their hands, or, through means of your bounty, rendered

a cheap and eaſy purchaſe to them, they cannot well forbear to caſt their eyes upon them, and examine their contents, which may at length challenge their attention and ſerious contemplation.

Theſe will be good means of counteracting that poiſon, which, in theſe days, is ſo artfully and induſtriouſly ſcattered, and ſo heedleſsly picked up by incautious hands. Such as is conveyed in books of profeſſed infidelity, by authors openly denying the Lord who bought them; in books of *inſidious* ſcepticiſm, craftily leading to infidelity; in tracts of lewdneſs, and an immoral caſt; in tracts of enthuſiaſm and ſedition, hoſtile to government, and to every branch of our happy conſtitution, both in church and ſtate, wherein the preſent age, to its great diſgrace, ſo fertily abounds.

Strange, that in an age of light, and affecting the character of ſcience, ſo many ſhould be reverting back again into all the darkneſs of illiterate, wild enthuſiaſm; others, into all the madneſs of unprincipled, uncontrolled licentiouſneſs, under the name and cloak of ſupporting liberty: for licentiouſneſs and true liberty are incompatible names and things, mutually deſtructive to each other. The preſent juncture then calls for

books

books of the moſt ſerious caſt, to correct the venom which ſuch virulent tracts have ſpread before unguarded minds; to impreſs religion, and the fear of God, and thereby inculcate loyalty, as a branch of chriſtian morals.

We have but too lately ſeen, alas! into what confuſion and terror, how near to the brink of ruin and aſhes, our civil diſſentions, and the clamours of faction, deceiving the multitude, had ſhamefully reduced our city, in the unhappy commencement of the laſt ſummer. God be thanked, that through the ſuperintendance of his Providence, the rage was permitted to be but ſhort, for it was cruel: wherein, through the voice of ſedition, and the ſubtle operations of the malevolent, ſome of the beſt of men, and the ableſt to give counſel, and to preſerve our ſtate againſt the foreign and domeſtic enemy, were the firſt pointed out as victims to popular fury and reſentment. God grant, that we may never experience the like again in any part of our gracious ſovereign's dominions! Let us labour to prevent it by wholeſome books of loyalty ſpread among the people, and put induſtriouſly into their hands from the beginning of life! And let us be watchful over thoſe whom we appoint teachers and ſchool-maſters, as perſons capable,

in their reſpective charges, of promoting the greateſt good, or propagating the moſt noxious evil by poiſoning the minds of the riſing generation!

But your munificence, my brethren in this labour of love, doth not terminate here, within the limits of your own land. The full extended view of this Society takes in a much larger circumference; for as it aims at the inſtruction of youth, and the confirmation of ripened years at home, comprehending within your tutelage the principality of *Wales*, and the neighbouring Iſles of *Man* and *Scilly*, by the publication of the Book of Life in their reſpective languages; ſo alſo doth a

Third branch of your liberal care extend itſelf to perſons of all nations, barbarians as well as civilized; by the miſſion of teachers and catechiſts into the remoteſt corners of the earth, for the converſion of *Indians*; by the diſtribution of religious tracts among thoſe that *are* converted, for their fuller inſtruction and confirmation in the faith. Thus *to them that ſat in darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, hath the light ſhined*;[k] and through the continuation of your munificence may

[k] Iſa. ix. 2.

ſtill

ſtill ſhine *more and more, unto the perfect day.* For the poor of every quarter under heaven, as well as the rich, *have thus the goſpel preached unto them.*

But as it is impoſſible for the wiſeſt and beſt framed inſtitutions upon earth always to eſcape the tongue of cenſure, and the ſpleen of the malignant, merely ſometimes perhaps for this very reaſon, becauſe they *are* friendly to virtue and religion; nay, ſometimes to eſcape the jaundiced eye of miſ-conception and prejudice, or the miſapprehenſions of the well-meaning, but miſled and injudicious; ſo it may be expedient, before I proceed to my laſt general head, to offer ſome reply to the objector, and try to ſatisfy the doubtful.

Let it not then any longer be objected to theſe ſeminaries of virtue, that children come hereby to be inflated with pride, and exalted above their ſtation. For ſurely it is not criminal pride to learn to *labour truly*, in every ſituation of life, low as well as high, in which it ſhall pleaſe the providence of God to place them. No: the firſt element of chriſtian doctrine is humility, from their Saviour's birth in a ſtable, to his ſufferings on the croſs.

Pride is not founded on the *improvement* of the underſtanding, but on the *weakneſs* of it: not on the precepts of the meek and humble *Jeſus*, but on the rude preſumptions of an unſubdued, untutored vanity. Unleſs it be ſuch pride, as raiſeth the heart above vice and baſe ſlavery to mean and ſenſual paſſion. Such pride is laudable. Vicious pride is founded in ignorance, and is a proof of imbecillity in judgment. It is an uncultivated mind, which is the mother of ſelf-conceit, ready to dictate to ſuperiors, and diſclaim in itſelf a ſubordination to any controul.

For which reaſon, there are not more flagrant inſtances of arrogant and conceited poſitiveneſs in opinion to be met with in the world, than among the loweſt and leaſt civilized part of the human race. A pride, which is to be corrected only by a cultivation of the underſtanding to a better knowledge of itſelf. Whereas ſuch ignorance, and its aſſociate enthuſiaſm, have been not only hurtful to the private individual, but the cauſes of ſectariſm, often perilous, and ſometimes deſtructive to ſtates. Inſtruct men well, and they will be more likely to conform themſelves to the meekneſs and ſimplicity *that is in Chriſt*.

True

True Chriſtianity teacheth man to know himſelf; and ſelf-knowledge will ſoon convince him how little he hath to be proud of. It will teach him his own deficiencies; which to every true diſcerner of himſelf will be ſufficiently humiliating. True Chriſtianity, like its Author, is all meekneſs and condeſcenſion, and lowlineſs of mind and heart: for it ſtates before us the condition of human nature; and ſuch humiliation and modeſty will be the beſt ground of ſubſequent advancement in moral and intellectual excellence. The meekneſs of *Chriſt* will be the beſt monitor againſt the ſwelling ſpirit, the ableſt tutor and controller of the human heart.

But we may obſerve further, that different qualifications are requiſite, even for the menial offices of life, in different ages and countries, proportioned to the different advancement of thoſe countries in ſcience. Such talents in reading, writing, and cyphering, are now requiſite in many families, as would have been ſufficient for higher offices in former ages; and many a place in a good creditable family hath been loſt for want of theſe qualifications. It is made almoſt a conſtant inquiry about thoſe who offer themſelves for ſervice, in many families, whether

whether they have a competent ſkill in theſe recommendatory arts.

It will ever be a matter of inquiry in *ſerious* families, what their *religion* is; whether they have been bred up in *any*; and in what *profeſſion*, whether in principles calculated to keep them honeſt, faithful, and diligent; or in vague, enthuſiaſtic notions, without any ſteady principle.

Furthermore, that portion of knowledge might be ſufficient for the lower ranks, and the ſupply of domeſtic offices in one country, as for inſtance, among barbarians and ſavages, which would not be ſo in another; which would appear pitiable in our own. But however this may be, we are to do the beſt we can for our brethren in life, to qualify them for their reſpective ſituations in it; not only to make them uſeful here, but alſo happy hereafter. We can never affirm, that any perſons are the worſe for the improvement of their underſtandings. It would be an impeachment of our own to ſuppoſe it. It would be an ill return to the God who gave us faculties for our cultivation. Our duty certainly is to improve the human intellect, wherever it falls within our reach, and extend the bleſſings of the goſpel of *Jeſus* as wide as we can.

Education

Education in religion and induſtry will be the beſt preſervative of innocence. And innocence, and her ſiſter modeſty, will be mutual guardians to each other. It is idleneſs, joined with vanity, uncontrolled by any ſolid, rational principle, that often gives a looſe to the licentious tongue, the tongue of abuſe; hardens the countenance, and brings forth the ſtubborn look of defiance againſt magiſtracy and legal government. Where then ſhall we find the foundations of integrity, of the moral man, of the ſincere Chriſtian, of the ſober, peaceable member of the ſtate, laid ſo well, and ſo ſecurely amongſt the lower ranks, as in theſe ſchools and nurſeries of early virtue? The books diſperſed by this Society, as they tend to ſecure the foundation, ſo will they likewiſe promote the moral ſuperſtructure.

Such, my brethren, united in this Society of religion, is your pious intention, ſuch your labour of love in the Lord. Give me leave now to proceed briefly in the

Third and laſt place, to the reward of your labour. And here the bleſſings might be conſidered either in a public or a private view, as national or domeſtic; bleſſings upon families, as well as individuals. For he, who lighteth up his neighbour's torch by his own, addeth

addeth thereby a luſtre to his own hemiſphere. He, that teacheth another, contributeth thereby to the common ſtock of knowledge; *and look, what he layeth out, it ſhall be paid him again!* He layeth in the breaſt of others a foundation of ſtill further public improvement. And commercial ſtates, that have ſown moral and religious knowledge, and promoted advancement therewith in natural ſcience, will reap frequent returns of gratitude from the ſtrength and alliance of the people whom they have civilized, and nurtured up in literature. Thus *he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.*[l]

For that I may conclude, my brethren, in words of divine encouragement, to this land of liberality; *If thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry, and give water of* inſtruction *to the thirſty, and ſatisfy the empty ſoul, then ſhall the Lord guide thee continually, and ſatisfy thy ſoul in drought*; when thy ſoul thirſteth after counſel, in the day of doubtfulneſs, and the hour of trouble, the dew of heaven ſhall deſcend upon thee; divine wiſdom ſhall ſink into thine heart; *and thou ſhalt be like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of waters, whoſe waters fail not.*[m]

[l] Prov. xi. 25. [m] Iſa. lviii. 10—11.

DISCOURSE X.

The Intention and due Improvement of the Sympathetic Affections of the human Mind. — Two Diſcourſes preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, on *Sunday*, *April* 19, and *Thurſday*, *April* 23, 1789; being the Days of General Thankſgiving for his Majeſty's ſafe Recovery; and of the public Proceſſion to St. *Paul*'s: —Publiſhed by Requeſt.

ROMANS XII. 15.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice.

THAT man was intended to be a ſocial being, appears from the ſeveral affections of his nature. That complacency of ſoul, and inward ſympathy of pleaſure, which we

we feel from the happineſs and proſperity of our neighbour, is a proof that we were deſigned to converſe, and live in friendſhip with him. But friendſhip is an union of heart and affections.

This complacency is ſtrongly inherent in every generous breaſt, in ſuch as have not perverted, or overcome the very principles of their conſtitution by habitually-indulged vices of envy or malevolence. It is an affection, probably for this reaſon implanted, that being duly improved, and properly applied, it might lead us to promote as much as poſſible the good of others; ſo that we might rejoice with them in the degree of happineſs they had attained, or might vigorouſly aſſiſt them in the purſuit of happineſs: inaſmuch as we are ſtrongly inclined to proſecute the gratification of all the pleaſing affections of our nature, whether the emolument terminate in ourſelves or others. It is, in ſhort, that virtue, which if any other, according to the opinion of ſome ancient philoſophers concerning virtue, muſt be allowed to be its own reward.

For what can be more grateful to our nature than joy, and the mutual expreſſions of it? In what could we more reaſonably, or eagerly, wiſh to communicate with our fellow-

low-beings, than in their rational pleaſures and ſatisfactions? This is to make *their* pleaſures and ſatisfactions our *own:* to enjoy bleſſings which are more than properly our own: this is amply the ſhare of every good man. It is a branch of that benevolence which wiſheth well to all men, and is a reward of that benevolence which receiveth benefit from the common good of all men.

To the practice of a duty ſo pleaſing in itſelf, ſo agreeable to our natural frame and conſtitution, one would think it almoſt needleſs to add any precept or injunction. One would think that men ſhould at all times be diſpoſed *to rejoice with them that do rejoice*, how little ſoever they might be inclined to ſympathiſe with the calamities of their brethren, and *to weep with them that weep*. It is, indeed, the ſame principle of benevolence improved, which ſhould carry us to the performance of both parts of the duty; to ſympathiſe with our neighbour in all the incidents that affect his life, his property, and ſatisfactions. But a ſympathy of joy being the more pleaſing affection, it muſt be eaſier to comply with that branch of humane and chriſtian benevolence.

Yet an Apoſtle thought it not unworthy of an injunction. For ſo contracted, or rather

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ſo malignant were the ſpirits of ſome men, ſo biaſſed by malicious habits, or ſo overrun with ſelfiſhneſs, that they were apt to think every bleſſing ſomething abſtracted from themſelves, which was added to their neighbour's treaſure. Thus did they contrive to invert the order of the Apoſtle's precept; to rejoice where they ought to weep, and to weep where they ought to rejoice; to convert the happineſs of others into the unnatural food of their own miſery, and to reap calamity from the fruitful field of their neighbour's joy.

However, Providence hath ſo ordered things, for a natural diſcouragement to malevolence, that ſuch tempers are in themſelves a puniſhment to their poſſeſſors; that ſuch perſons are as unhappy in their own indulgences, as they would have others be in the loſs of any enjoyments. They begin to partake in this life of that inward unhappineſs, of that poiſon of ſpirit, and rancour of heart, which will hereafter be the puniſhment of all malevolent affections, of envy, hatred, malice, and ill-will for ever.

They *muſt* be thus unhappy! for on which ſide of the world ſoever the envious man may turn himſelf, he cannot but ſee multiplied inſtances of divine favour. He may behold every man crowned with *ſome* inſtances of the

the loving-kindneſs of the Lord: he may therefore gather the food of the viper, that gnaweth upon his vitals, from every object that ſurrounds him; he may invert the ſweet labours of the bee, and ſuck the gall of aſps from every plant.

Such is the recompence of the envious or malicious man, and this the reſult of his purſuits and attainments. Let us turn ourſelves therefore from ſuch a diſagreeable object, ſuch a blot upon human nature; and conſider rather the humanity, the chriſtianity, the motives, the tendencies, and the rewards of that ſocial ſympathy and benevolence, which will incline us to rejoice in the bleſſings of our fellow-beings. And,

Firſt, let us conſider it as a diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of human nature, as it is indeed one of its principal ornaments. The brute creation, it is true, ſhew ſome marks of kindneſs and affection towards each other, as there is likewiſe a kind of harmony reigning through the *inanimate* part; but then the affections of the merely animal ſpecies, how ſtrong ſoever in ſome inſtances, are the effects of Inſtinct, not of Reaſon. They are a proof, however, of the benevolence and univerſal goodneſs of that Being who created and who guides them. They are like that

principle of gravitation in the material world, whereby all the parts of bodies are impelled towards each other, and ſeem to have a mutual inward tendency, a ſtronger apparent deſire of connexion, the nearer they approach towards each other.

But in man this propenſity to friendly and ſocial connexion is a virtue, becauſe it is the effect of reaſon and choice; as it is likewiſe correſpondent to the will of the Creator, who hath given ſufficient notices of his deſign, that he intended man for ſociety, by the ſenſe of mutual affection, love, and compaſſion, which he hath implanted in him.

"I am a man, and therefore I think no-"thing incident to man to be foreign from "my attention," was the much-applauded ſentiment of a refined heathen writer. And it is certainly true, that, as we were not born for ourſelves alone, ſo we ſhould not rejoice in our own happineſs alone, and think ourſelves unconcerned in every thing beyond us. Our country claims a part in our affections, ſaith *Plato*; we cannot therefore but exult in the peace, tranquillity, and happineſs of the community to which we belong, and in every thing that may make our country rejoice; in the life, recovery, and

and health of good princes, the regular execution of good laws, the adminiſtration of good government, and the preſervation of the honour, welfare, and dignity of our country; and we grieve at every thing, every malevolent temper and action, that tends to diſturb it.

The great admirer of *Plato*, *Cicero*, ſaith, "Seeing whatſoever is created on earth, was "deſigned for the ſervice of men, and men "themſelves for the ſervice and aſſiſtance of "one another, we certainly in this ſhould "be followers of nature's law, and ſhould "ſecond her intentions; and by doing all "that lies within the reach of our power "for the general benefit, by mutually giving "and receiving good turns, by mutual for-"giveneſs and forbearance with human "infirmities and imperfections, by our "knowledge, induſtry, riches, authority, or "other means, ſhould endeavour to keep up "that love, and ſocial amity, that ſhould "ſubſiſt among men."

Now that general principle of benevolence which will incline us to rejoice in the good of others, as it proves its proprietor to be a lover of mankind, will conſequently inſpire him with the love of the public in the firſt place, as the foundation, and grand ſecurity

of the good of individuals, and of his own. "Therefore," ſaith the above-mentioned writer, "when we have gone over all the "relations that are in the world, and tho-"roughly conſidered the nature of each, we "ſhall find that there is no one of greater "obligation, no one that is dearer and nearer "to us, than that which we all of us bear to "the public. We have a tender concern and "regard for our parents, for our children, "our kindred, and acquaintance; but the "love we have for our country embraces and "comprehends all other branches of love "whatever. For as much as the good and "welfare of our parents, of our children, of "our kindred and acquaintance, is included "in the good and ſafety of our country, and "depends upon, and cannot ſubſiſt with-"out it."

This univerſal benevolence, whereby we are diſpoſed to ſympathize with the ſeveral occurrences that happen to our fellow-beings, is ſo remarkable an ornament of the human nature, and ſo peculiarly connected with it, that in our language it is called by the name *Humanity*; a word ſo expreſſive, that it is difficult to find another equivalent, to anſwer all the ideas comprehended under it, in many other languages. And a word ſo ſingular in its

its derivation, as if this were the peculiar characteriſtic of the human nature, diſtinguiſhing it from that of other creatures. Bút, moreover, this is alſo Chriſtianity: for,

2dly, This principle is no leſs an ornament of human nature, than a recommendation of chriſtian religion in particular. The goſpel diſpenſation was uſhered in with the triumphant hymn of *Good-will among men*. But where can good-will to men be ſhewn without any ſocial union? where can ſocial union ſubſiſt without concurrent ſenſations of joy, and a benevolent concern for the intereſts of ſociety?

It was a reflection caſt upon the *Jewiſh* nation by our Saviour, that their affections could not be engaged, either to himſelf or to *John* the Baptiſt, by any inſtances of ſocial conduct whatſoever. The ſentence is taken from a proverbial phraſe then in uſe among children; *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.*[a] His doctrine proceeds, in many places, upon a ſuppoſal of good-natured coincidence among men in all amiable affections: and to enforce the ſame is a material favourite ſubject with his Apoſ-

[a] Matt. xi 17.

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tles. From whence, otherwiſe, are thoſe high encomiums upon charity, wherein it is preferred by St. *Paul* to every other virtue? a virtue, whoſe character it is, that it delights in nothing which deſtroys ſocial equity; but delights in that which promotes fidelity in the converſation of men: *it rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth:*[b] in truth, that great ſupport, and neceſſary ingredient, of all friendly communications among men.

3dly, The motives then which excite us to labour after the acquirement, or cultivation of this humane and Chriſtian diſpoſition are, every argument that has been urged either from common humanity or Chriſtianity. For ſhall we pretend to call ourſelves human creatures, without humane affections, the diſtinguiſhing mark of the human nature, or, in other words, according to our language, that whereby it is principally known, and wherein it peculiarly conſiſts, being ſtiled *Humanity*? Shall we pretend to call ourſelves Chriſtians, without the diſpoſitions of a Chriſtian? He that can ſtand, inſenſible, amidſt all the occurrences that may happen to his fellow-beings, ſhould rather be called a rock, or a marble, than a human creature; rather

[b] 1 Cor. xiii. 6.

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any thing than a Chriſtian. He muſt either have eyes not to ſee, or ears not to hear, or a heart not to feel.

Even ſelf-intereſt ſhould move a man to the ſtudy of friendly, communicative habits. And the ſelf-intereſted man, if he rightly knew himſelf, and wherein his own real happineſs conſiſted, would rejoice with others, even upon a principle of ſelfiſhneſs. For does he purſue pleaſure? What more pleaſing than communications of joy? Does he purſue temporal advantages? What more likely to procure him the friendſhip and good-will of many, than to rejoice at the peace and proſperity of many? Does he aim at an eternal good, in which ſelf-love does more eminently conſiſt? Let him, by benign and charitable habits and behaviour, aim to ſecure the favour of that benign Being who is to confer it. In ſhort, the motives are infinite, like the objects and opportunities that occur for the exerciſe of it, and like the great Author of goodneſs whom we ſhall imitate in the practice.

But the further incitements to the exerciſe of this amiable virtue, its natural tendency, and the rewards enſuing, muſt be reſerved, God willing, for the ſubject of another morning's meditation.

We, of this nation, have a peculiar obligation upon us, at this time, to cultivate all pious ſentiments of heart, preparatory to the general aſſembly of the congregation, in the courſe of the enſuing week, that with the united voice of praiſe we may expreſs our gratitude, and offer up our thankſgiving to the King of heaven for his ſignal mercy vouchſafed unto us, in the reſtoration of our gracious ſovereign to the bleſſing of health, to his illuſtrious family, and the whole community.

We have *wept with thoſe that wept*,[c] with thoſe that were grieved for his affliction; and God, in his infinite compaſſion to our nation, hath now given us an opportunity of *rejoicing with them that do rejoice* in his recovery. And who is there among us whoſe heart is not elated with pious gratitude on this occaſion?

The land hath mourned, and not only *this*, but alſo *foreign* lands joined in condolence with us. The lamentation and anxiety were univerſal during the cloud of ſickneſs that ſat over us; and no leſs extenſive was the joy that every where broke in with the return of light and health to our ſovereign again. A ſolid and conſpicuous proof this of the eſteem and affection entertained, not only by his ſubjects, but the world, for himſelf and his invaluable royal conſort.

[c] Rom. xii. 15.

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The ſolemnity of an appointed public proceſſion to the houſe of God, is a conſpicuous proof of their ardent attachment to the divine honour, of their pious acknowledgment and ſubmiſſion to the will and ſuperintending providence of the ſupreme God, and of their zeal to promote the ſame ſenſe of religion with their own among their ſubjects. May the holy ardor, by the powers of harmony, be that day ſpread throughout the temple! And may there hence ariſe, and from henceforth exiſt, one prevailing emulation among their people, which ſhall imitate their ſovereigns the beſt in piety, and all conjugal fidelity, and true holineſs!

For what we eſteem, eſpecially in our ſuperiors, it is natural for us to imitate; and, what we love and venerate, to follow. If then we admire the example ſet before us at the head of our community, in every ſocial, domeſtic, and private virtue, we ſhall endeavour to copy the graces of the portrait into the lines of our own conduct.

Theſe principles will lead us to a ſincere love of a community ſeated under the auſpicious influence of ſuch preſiding guardians: theſe will promote the circulation of mutual ſympathy, and all animating chriſtian graces throughout the ſocial body.

So

So ſhall the King rejoice in the Lord Jehovah, who reſtoreth to him health; the people ſhall rejoice in God their Saviour, who hath reſtored to them their protector; and his church ſhall rejoice in God their defender and ſanctifier.

The Lord ſhall ſhew loving-kindneſs, and our land ſhall give her increaſe.

God ſhall bleſs us, and all the ends of the earth ſhall fear him.

DISCOURSE

DISCOURSE XI.

The Intention and due Improvement of the Sympathetic Affections of the human Mind. — Two Diſcourſes preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, on *Sunday*, *April* 19, and *Thurſday*, *April* 23, 1789; being the Days of General Thankſgiving for his Majeſty's ſafe Recovery; and of the public Proceſſion to St. *Paul*'s: —Publiſhed by Requeſt.

ROMANS XII. 15.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice.

DEVOUT acknowledgments to the ſupreme, univerſal Parent, the original ſource of all bounty, from whom every good, and ſalutary, and perfect gift cometh, are

are the genuine effuſions of a truly grateful heart. They are alſo, when publicly offered up, ſtrong incitements to mutual love and beneficence. In this view I have conſidered the ſympathetic affections of the human heart, implanted by the God of nature, in my diſcourſe on the laſt ſabbath.

The warm ejaculation in the poetic hymn of a pious exemplary monarch, among the worſhippers of the true God, the *Jewiſh* nation, may be no unſeaſonable introduction to the preſent diſcourſe.

The living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day; the father to the children ſhall make known thy truth.

The Lord was ready to ſave me: therefore we will ſing my ſongs to the ſtringed inſtruments, all the days of our life, in the houſe of the Lord.[a]

This was the animated, poetic tranſport, this the devout reſolution of the good king *Hezekiah*, juſt recovered from a dangerous, alarming diſeaſe, and raiſed from the bed of ſickneſs.

Senſible of the great obligations he lay under to the univerſal Parent for the bleſſing of life, and the proſpect of its longer continuance; reflecting upon the true enjoyments of life, in the right application of his faculties,

[a] Iſ. xxxviii. 19, 20.

and

and in celebrating the praiſes of his Creator; mindful that when once the curtain of this world is fallen, the opportunity of exerting abilities, and ſhewing gratitude on this earthly ſtage is over, that the dead body cannot celebrate him, the lifeleſs lump cannot magnify its Maker; he betakes himſelf immediately to the taſk, the neceſſary taſk of a grateful being; breaking forth in that holy rapture, *The grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot* await thy truth any longer in this earthly ſyſtem: *The living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee; the father to the children ſhall make known thy truth*; that their poſterity may continue to perpetuate the ſame, and ſo hand down the goodneſs of the Creator throughout all generations.

Similar to this is the concluding ſong of the Pſalmiſt, tranſmitted down to us in the inſpired collection of holy *David*; *The dead praiſe not thee, O Lord; neither all they that go down into ſilence. But we will praiſe the name of the Lord, from this time forth*, in our poſterity, through all ſucceſſive ages, *for evermore.*

Such were the ſentiments of thoſe two diſtinguiſhed princes in piety; and ſuch, no doubt, is the language in the boſom of our religious

religious ſovereign this day, as he enters ſolemnly into the temple of the Lord, at the head of his people. Such example is perſuaſive exhortation, in the face of all ranks, to conſtant public attendance on the houſe of God.

Many in this congregation may accompany me in theſe reflexions; many may go before me; they may recollect in themſelves *late* and perhaps unexpected recoveries; deliverances from acute and grievous pains; ſpace allowed for reformation in morals, for refinement of themſelves in virtue, and preparation thereby for a better ſtate. Theſe will be truly ſolid grounds of rejoicing.

Then let them go forth in the ſtrength of the Lord God, and proſper through his favour!

Such meditations frequently recurring, and properly encouraged, will excite perſons to make a proper uſe of their rational exiſtence in all its various branches of duty; and a proper uſe thereof will be the beſt and trueſt expreſſion of gratitude to the donor and preſerver of life, and every conſequent endowment and bleſſing annexed. The heart of the good man will overflow with gratitude for his preſent rational enjoyments, for every improvement and refinement of his moral

and

and intellectual powers, and for the hopes and expectations given him of far greater and more abundant ſatisfactions in a more exalted, durable ſtate.

Such anticipations will enhance the love of ſocial and benign beings towards each other. And thus may we improve the various ſympathies and impulſes of the human heart into our own virtue, as well as into our own ſelf-gratifications, and the enlargement of our own felicity. This leads us, in the order of the heads propoſed in theſe two diſcourſes, to conſider,

4thly, The natural tendency of that frame and complexion of the human mind, which engages our attention, and feelings, to the happineſs or grievances of our fellow-beings. Now the principal bias impreſt will be to promote as far as poſſible the good of others, in order to extend our own enjoyments, and procure to ourſelves a natural gratification.

Theſe tenderneſſes of fraternal love, theſe *yearnings of the bowels upon our brother*,[b] which call us to the retirement of our chamber, that we may ſometimes *weep* unobſerved in ſilence there; theſe internal feelings are not, as ſome[c] writers would

[b] Gen. XLIII. 30.
[c] Hobbes, and others who are his followers.

affect

affect to call them, mere weakneſſes of the human frame: they are far from weakneſſes; far remote from fear for ourſelves; for the braveſt heroes have oftentimes been the moſt compaſſionate to the conquered and diſtreſſed: ſo far are they from being founded in unmanly ſelfiſh-fears, that ſuch fears frequently lead contrary to the purpoſes of commiſeration and pity; urging the ſoul precipitately, under the pleas of ſelf-defence, and ſelf-preſervation, into raſh hard-hearted counſels, and haſty deeds of cruelty. They are far removed from vanities of oſtentation, for they chuſe to indulge themſelves in ſilence and obſcure retreats, till they can exert themſelves in doing good, and adminiſtering redreſs: they are far removed from any of the intrigues of ſelf-intereſt; for the firſt emotions of them are antecedent to any thoughts of ſelf-intereſt; even ruſhing into danger for the ſake of their beloved object, without any retroſpect to *ſelf*. They are genuine emotions of the human heart, ſpringing from liberal ſources in the human conſtitution. They are impulſes of the God of nature, by nature's law, which is the will and law of Providence, urging us powerfully to relieve the grievances, or augment the felicities, of our fellow-creatures. The firſt feelings of compaſſion, at the ſight of wretchedneſs and

woe,

woe, are a real ſorrow and concern for the miſery of our fellow-creatures, wherein the *diſtreſſed*, not *ourſelves*, are the objects: they baniſh *ſelf* out of the queſtion; and earneſtly excite the mind to conſider and deviſe ſpeedy and effectual meaſures of relief to the oppreſſed.

If theſe are imbecillities, they are the imbecillities of an order of beings far ſuperior to man: for we have the higheſt authority to ſuppoſe that ſuperior intelligences have ſimilar ſenſations of ſympathetic kindneſs; that celeſtial beings intereſt themſelves in the concerns of men, and have a degree of communion with them in their welfare; *that there is joy in the preſence of the angels of God*[a] over the diſcreet ſteps of man, and over every one that turneth to the path of happineſs.

We read alſo, that the benign myſteries of redemption are meaſures of divine œconomy and wiſdom, which the *angels have deſired to look into*.[e] If theſe affections then are not unworthy of ſuch exalted beings, much leſs can they be deemed unworthy of man.

Acts of mutual beneficence will be the fruits and teſts of the reality of theſe ſympathies: they are the proofs of ſincere condolence in grief, or of congratulations in joy.

[a] Luke xv. 7, 10. [e] 1 Pet. i. 12.

The principle is univerſal, and congenial with our nature; the application and exerciſe of it is left to our own choice and virtue; both are honourable to humanity; both eſſential to the chriſtian character.

We have ſeen the intent of Providence in implanting this affection, in making it ſo cloſely inherent in our nature; and in annexing pleaſure to the exerciſe of it. Inaſmuch as men are ſtrongly actuated to purſue that which gives them pleaſing perceptions. Public beneficence, therefore, will be much improved by this communicative diſpoſition to public joy. Our gratitude will ſhew itſelf in acts of beneficence, as well as in the voice of melody: and may the holy flame, kindling this day by example, be inſpired from breaſt to breaſt, throughout the holy temple: ſo that we may all henceforth unitedly endeavour to do as much good as we can, in order to propagate the circle of bliſs as wide as we can!

5thly. As to the reward of the diſpoſition recommended, which was the laſt thing I propoſed to inſiſt upon, I have, in great meaſure, already anticipated what may be ſaid of that, in relation to this life, by proving that it is its *own* reward; that the immediate gratification which attends it is a ſufficient encouragement

couragement to the cultivation of the habit. For that perſon muſt be of a very melancholy ſplenetic diſpoſition indeed, who cannot be hired by the inward pleaſure of the office to rejoice with his neighbour in any happineſs he has obtained, or has recovered; ſince he will thereby enlarge his own poſſeſſions, in the enjoyment of thoſe of other men: nay, he may multiply his ſatisfactions beyond meaſure, as he extends the objects; and may make them great, and unlimited, like the benevolence, generoſity, and magnificence of his own ſoul.

If there has been obſerved, by ſome writers, to be a ſort of pleaſure in the ſociety of grief, how much more in the communications of joy! to catch and return the mutual complacency of ſoul, increaſing as it goes from mouth to mouth, and from heart to heart! And how thankful ſhould we be to the Supreme Diſpoſer of all things, who thus hath made the diſcharge of this branch of our duty, and its reward, ſo intimately connected, that they always travel together!

Whatever other enjoyments may fail and deſert us in this life, the joys of benevolence can never fail us, as long as there are inſtances of divine goodneſs in the world; foraſmuch as the good man may thereby appropriate to

himſelf, as far as his knowledge reacheth, the felicities of all mankind, and partake, as it were, of all the good in the world. In this ſenſe, therefore, *charity never faileth.*[f]

But the great reward of all is, that it will follow us into another life, to be a part, and an enhancement of our felicity there. And how great ſhall be our mutual congratulations of each other, when we ſhall have arrived together at the land of everlaſting peace, ſecurity, and bliſs! when we ſhall, each of us, have obtained the *prize of our high calling in Chriſt Jeſus!*[g] For it is reaſonable to conclude, from the common nature of man, that he will continue to be a ſocial being in the next life, as well as in the preſent; and that the happineſs of that ſtate will be the perfection of ſocial love.

To be intimately united with the beſt of men, that have ever lived upon the earth; to be in ſociety with beings of the moſt exalted underſtandings, of the moſt refined purity and holineſs, is one of the higheſt conceptions of intellectual pleaſure to which the mind of man can be exalted. It gave the higheſt raptures to *Cicero*, that his extenſive imagination could reach, to think, that he ſhould one day converſe with *Lælius*, *Africanus*, and other great, wiſe, and good

[f] 1 Cor. xiii. 8. [g] Philip. iii. 14.

men,

men, that had lived before him in the *Roman* ſtate. And agreeably to this notion we are informed by St. *Paul*, that by the Chriſtian diſpenſation we are entered into community, and may conſequently hope hereafter to be admitted into the immediate ſociety *of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born, which are written in heaven.*[f] This expreſſion of being *written in heaven*, being an alluſion to the cuſtom of enrollment of citizens by name, whether preſent or abſent, in ancient ſtates and ſocieties.

We may conclude then, that mutual and more perfect benevolence will ſubſiſt in another life, as the crown and cement of ſocial happineſs. Wherefore St. *Paul* prefers charity, or chriſtian love, to all other chriſtian graces and excellencies, on account of its duration. For when faith ſhall be ſwallowed up in viſion, and hope in fruition, when prophecies ſhall fail, and tongues ſhall ceaſe, and knowledge ſhall vaniſh away, charity, which is only a more perfect and refined benevolence upon goſpel motives, charity ſhall never fail; but ſhall ſtill ſubſiſt a celeſtial virtue.

[f] Heb. xii. 22, 23.

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That I may ſum up then in ſhort, what hath been ſaid upon the ſubject; To ſympathiſe with the happineſs or griefs of our fellow-beings is a proof of benevolence; it is a mark of common humanity: it is a duty and ornament of chriſtianity. The motives to it are great and various, as the advantages are numerous: the exerciſe of it is agreeable, yea a pleaſant thing it is to communicate in joy. It is a token of love to mankind; a cement of affection to the community; an addition to the common ſtock of happineſs, by participating that of others, and imparting our own: it is productive of good offices within our ſphere of action, to our neighbour, or to the public, that we may rejoice therewith: it is a guard againſt the pain of envy; a multiplication of our felicities; an alleviation of our miſeries: it is rewarded with the love of men, with whom we converſe in this life; and in the next will be rewarded with the love of that God, whom we have ſtudiouſly endeavoured to imitate in that favourite, conſpicuous attribute of his nature, his Goodneſs.

And now, that we may conclude this ſolemn ſervice of thankſgiving with one united ſupplication, in which the nations that have ſym-

ſympathized will be ready to join with us; May the ſame hand which removed *backward the ſhadow upon the dial of the king of Judah*,[h] and preſideth over nations, add length to the days of our gracious ſovereign and his conſort, and very long protract the example, which is the ornament of their throne, a bleſſing to their people; and finally advance them to that eternal kingdom, where peace, and love, and harmony and joy ſhall reign for evermore! Amen!

[h] Iſ. xxxviii. 8.

THE END.

ERRATA. VOL. I.

Page 18, l. 21. *for* one thought *read* one who thought

VOL. II.

Page 40, l. 28. *for* which *read* who
Running Title *for* 39 *read* 43
L. 24. *after* among *read* the